

1998

# The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission 1998 Annual Report

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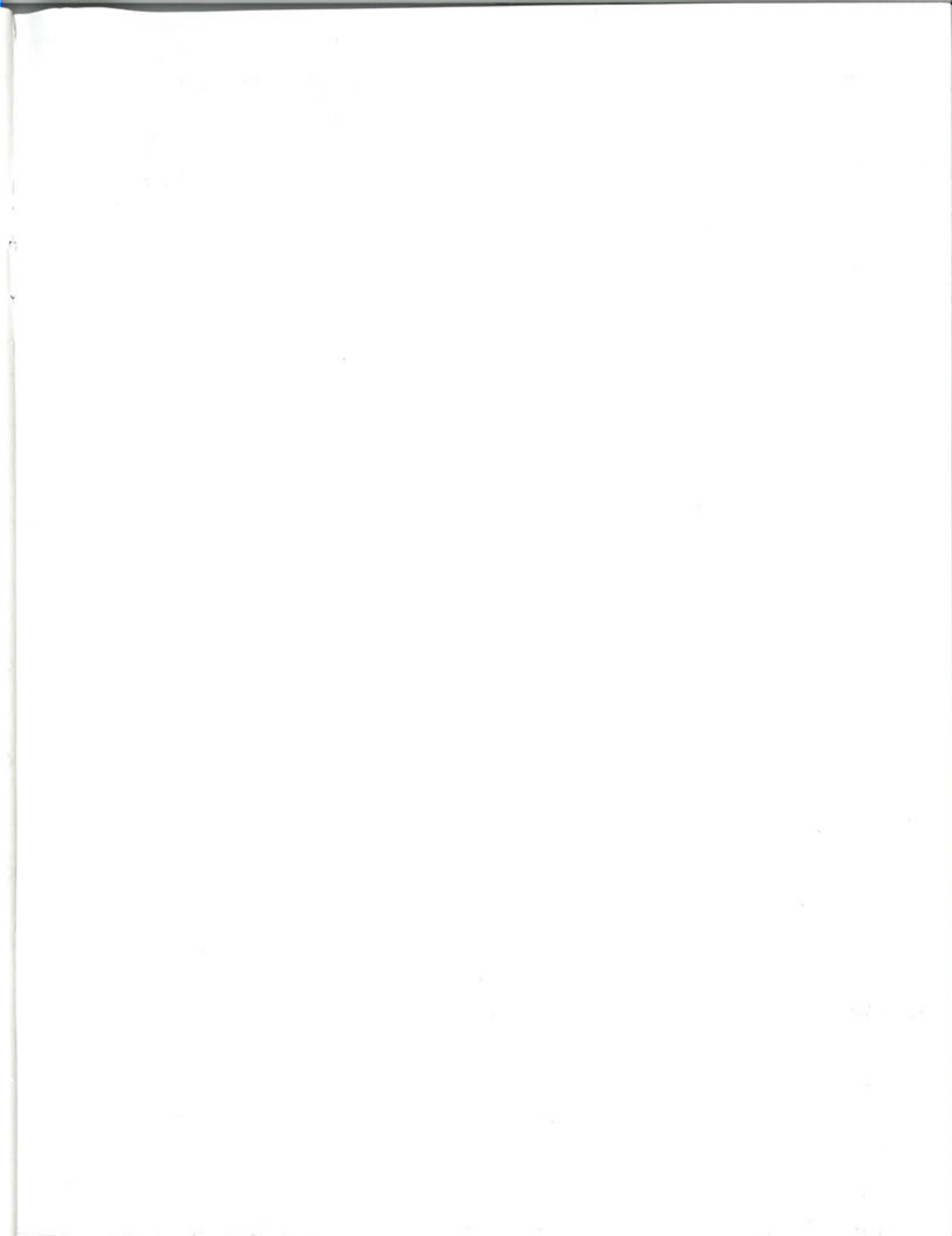
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# The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission



1998 Annual Report





## Offices

### Headquarters & District V

2200 N. 33rd St./PO Box 30370  
Lincoln, NE 68503-0370  
402-471-0641 / fax 402-471-5528

### Metro Office

1212 Bob Gibson Blvd.  
Omaha, NE 68108-2020  
402-595-2144 / fax 402-595-2569

### District I

East Hwy. 2 / P.O. Box 725  
Alliance, NE 69301-0725  
308-763-2940 / fax 308-763-2943

### District II

524 Panzer St. / P.O. Box 508  
Bassett, NE 68714-0934  
402-684-2921 / fax 402-684-2816

### District III

2201 N. 13th St.  
Norfolk, NE 68701-2267  
402-370-3256 / 402-370-3256

### District IV

301 E. State Farm Rd.  
North Platte, NE 69101-0430  
308-535-8025 / fax 308-535-8028

### District VI

1617 First Ave.  
Kearney, NE 68847-6057  
308-865-5309 / fax 308-865-5309

## Commissioners

### District 1

Thomas "Tip" O'Neill Jr., Lincoln  
1/15/1996-1/15/2001

### District 2

Woody Egermayer, Omaha  
1/16/1997-1/15/2002

### District 3

John Miller, Blair  
1/28/1998-1/15/2003

### District 4

William Berryman, Kearney  
2/28/1995-9/7/1999

### District 5

Daniel Wallen, McCook  
2/28/1995-1/15/2000

### District 6

Rob Coupland, Valentine  
9/7/1997-9/7/2002

### District 7

Tom J. Plummer, Jr., Ogallala  
11/3/1994-1/15/1999

## Administration

Rex Amack, Director  
Assistant Directors:  
Noelyn Isom  
Roger Kuhn  
Kirk Nelson

# PURPOSE

*The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is charged with managing and controlling the state's wildlife, parks and outdoor recreational resources in the best long-term interest of the people.*

*To accomplish that purpose, the Commission plans and implements its policies and programs efficiently and objectively; maintains a rich and diverse environment in Nebraska's lands and waters; provides outdoor recreation opportunities; manages wildlife resources for the maximum benefit of the people, and strives to help Nebraskans appreciate their roles in the natural world.*

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Complete copies of each division's annual report may be obtained by contacting the individual division at the Game and Parks Commission, 2200 N. 33rd St., P.O. Box 30370, Lincoln, NE 68503-0370.

## VISIT US ON THE INTERNET

<http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us>



# ADMINISTRATION

This division provides support services to all divisions through: Personnel, internal audit, in-service training, aircraft operations, word processing, headquarters maintenance, drug and alcohol reports, telephone switchboard, and district staff assistants.

Liaison with the Nebraska Legislature is a major duty of the division, as is providing assistance to the Director's Office and settling claims against the Commission.

## Aircraft Operations

The Piper Super Cub was transferred to the Nebraska State Patrol on September 1, 1998.

The aircraft was used for various surveys, counts, antelope and deer depredation complaints, fish and game, law enforcement and photography.

## Personnel

Functions of Personnel include payroll, Workers Compensation, retirement, insurance, performance planning, personnel records, and preparation of the personal services portion of the agency's operational budget.

The labor contract between the State of Nebraska and the Nebraska Association of Public Employees of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (NAPE/AFSCME) Local 61 covers 225 agency employees. The State Law Enforcement Bargaining Council (SLEBC) represents approximately 48 agency employees. Personnel serves as the liaison to the Department of Administrative Services Employee Relations Division.

There were 42 new permanent employees hired in 1998, and 39 employees were promoted/reclassified. Turnover for 1998 was 8.1% (36 employees). Numerous letters on employment possibilities and career information were received and answered. Staff also handled surveys regarding salaries, benefits and personnel turnover.

Personnel confers with the Office of Risk Management on Workers Compensation cases. Workers Compensation claims paid for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1998, came to \$349,927.00, which was down \$25,834.00 (6.9%) from 1997.

## PAYROLLS

### Permanent Employees

Total gross wages: \$13,317,893.09

Average number per payroll: 439

### Temporary Employees

Total gross wages: \$3,988,117.83

Average number per payroll: 457

Largest payroll: 879 employees

Smallest payroll: 120 employees

## In-Service Training

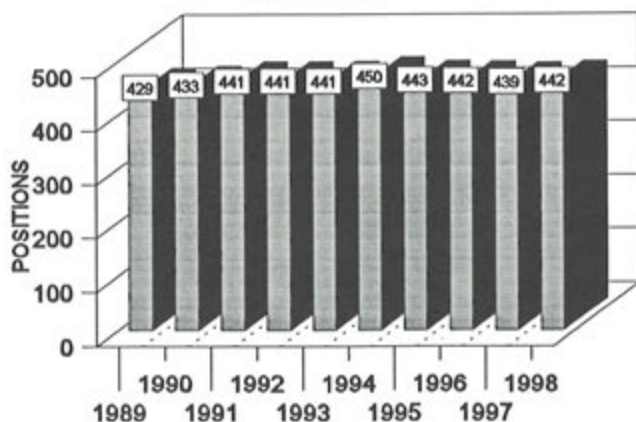
To help improve performance and help prepare employees for higher responsibility, in-service training is directed toward meeting the specialized needs of individual staff members who enroll in various of short courses, seminars and workshops. Broad-based training needs are met through in-house workshops for employee groups.

## Motor Vehicle Accidents

Commission employees were involved in 21 motor vehicle accidents, down 6 (22.2%) from 1998, and the lowest number of accidents since 1994. Two off-road accidents involved riding mowers being used on areas.

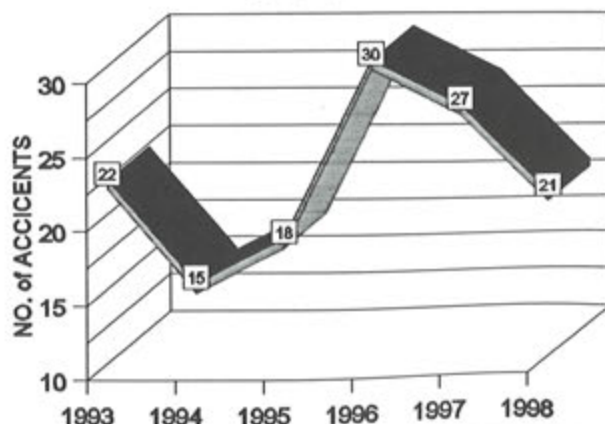
## PERMANENT EMPLOYEES

1989-1998



## MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

1993-1998



# BUDGET & FISCAL

This division has four sections, whose duties include:

1. **Permits Section** issues big-game permits; consigns hunting, fishing, park permits and stamps to vendors; issues boating certificates to county treasurers; maintains necessary records; receives, receipts, deposits and accounts for all monies collected; operates the Customer Service counter at the Lincoln Central Office.
2. **Accounts Payable and Cost Accounting Section** processes payments of operating expenses, employee expense documents, conducts audits, prepares monthly reports for Commission review; prepares all tax forms required by the Department of Revenue; distributes costs to appropriate areas for internal cost accounting, and maintains financial records for federal grants.
3. **Purchasing and Inventory Section** procures or coordinates procurement of materials, supplies, equipment and services and maintains an inventory system for agency-owned equipment.
4. **Budget Section** prepares the budget, monitors financial resources, assesses fiscal impact of proposed legislation, insures expenditures are in accord with the budget and applicable rules and regulations, and maintains financial records of capital projects.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### January 1, 1998, General Fund Appropriation and Cash on Hand:

Cowboy Trail Fund (2328)		\$ 114,478.87
Environmental Trust Fund (2329)		12,678,197.94
State Game Fund (2332)		
Includes Lifetime Hunt	1,139,307.25	
Includes Lifetime Fish	809,032.35	
Other	<u>7,885,704.04</u>	9,834,043.54
State Park Cash Revolving Fund (2333)		6,733,380.94
Nebraska Habitat Fund (2334)		3,961,942.23
Non-game and Endangered Species Cash Fund (2335)		348,838.49
Nebraska Snowmobile Trail Cash Fund (2337)		98,065.16
Nebraska Outdoor Recreation Development Fund (2338)		2,723,679.76
Trail Development Assistance Fund (2339)		60,721.51
Aquatic Habitat Fund (2341)		959,349.91
Federal Fund (4332)		
Bureau of Reclamation (8972)		305,775.69
National Recreation Trails Fund (4333)		0.00
General Fund (1000)	5,131,018.78	
Less Amount Lapsed	<u>1,460.66</u>	<u>5,129,558.12</u>

### Total General Fund Appropriations & Cash on hand January 1, 1998

**42,948,032.16**

### General Fund Appropriations & Cash Received during 1998

Cowboy Trail Fund (2328)		10,047.31
Environmental Trust Fund (2329)		10,187,979.55
State Game Fund (2332)		
Includes Lifetime Hunt	205,132.50	
Includes Lifetime Fish	134,637.50	
Other	<u>15,801,201.99</u>	16,140,971.99
State Park Cash Revolving Fund (2333)		13,518,978.26
Nebraska Habitat Fund (2334)		4,106,023.21
Non-game & Endangered Species Fund (2335)		198,184.59
Nebraska Snowmobile Trail Cash Fund (2337)		14,859.16
Nebraska Outdoor Recreation Development Fund (2338)		1,498,467.57
Trail Development Assistance Fund (2339)		53,485.30
Aquatic Habitat Fund (2341)		1,241,363.09
Federal Fund (4332)		
Bureau of Reclamation (8972)		790,117.10
National Recreation Assistance Trails Fund (4333)		224,960.69
General Fund (1000)		<u>9,113,376.00</u>

### Total General Fund Appropriations & Cash Received during 1998

**\$ 57,098,813.82**

### Expenditures by Fund Type during 1998

Cowboy Trail Fund (2328)	308.27
Environmental Trust Fund (2329)	6,942,521.85
State Game Fund (2332)	13,206,000.84
State Park Cash Revolving Fund (2333)	13,459,347.47
Nebraska Habitat Fund (2334)	3,570,296.06
Non-game & Endangered Species Fund (2335)	186,418.06
Nebraska Snowmobile Trail Cash Fund (2337)	2,325.00
Nebraska Outdoor Recreation Cash Fund (2338)	1,445,661.64
Trail Development Assistance Fund (2339)	46,814.00
Aquatic Habitat Fund (2341)	423,745.72
Federal Fund (4332)	
Bureau of Reclamation (8972)	830,232.57
National Recreation Assistance Trails Fund (4333)	224,960.59
General Fund (1000)	<u>8,318,055.02</u>
<b>Total Expenditures during 1998</b>	<b>48,656,687.09</b>

### End of the Year Fund Balances for 1998:

Cowboy Trail Fund (2328)	124,217.91
Environmental Trust Fund (2329)	15,923,655.64
State Game Fund (2332)	
Includes Lifetime Hunt	1,344,439.75
Includes Lifetime Fish	943,669.75
Other	<u>10,480,905.19</u>
State Park Cash Revolving Fund (2333)	12,769,014.69
Nebraska Habitat Fund (2334)	6,793,011.73
Non-game & Endangered Species Fund (2335)	4,497,669.38
Nebraska Snowmobile Trail Cash Fund (2337)	360,605.02
Nebraska Outdoor Recreation Assistance Fund (2338)	110,599.32
Trail Development Assistance Fund (2339)	2,776,485.69
Aquatic Habitat Fund (2341)	67,392.81
Federal Fund (4332)	1,776,967.28
Bureau of Reclamation (8972)	
National Recreation Trails Fund (4333)	265,660.22
General Fund (1000)	.10
	<u>5,924,879.10</u>

### Total General Fund Appropriation & Cash Balance Remaining on December 31, 1998

**\$ 51,390,158.89**



## 1998 EXPENDITURES

### OPERATIONAL COSTS

<b>Program 162 – Environmental Trust</b>		<b>\$ 6,942,521.85</b>
<b>Program 330 – Habitat Development</b>		
Game Cash	391.44	
Habitat Cash	<u>2,128,005.46</u>	2,128,396.90
<b>Program 336 – Wildlife Conservation</b>		
<b>Sub-Program 01 – Enforcement</b>		
General Fund	509,853.13	
State Game Fund	2,172,313.09	
State Park Cash Revolving	<u>558,190.37</u>	3,240,356.59
<b>Sub-Program 02 – Information &amp; Education</b>		
State Game Fund	1,759,645.21	
State Park Cash Revolving	<u>466,290.23</u>	2,225,935.44
<b>Sub-Program 04 – Game</b>		
State Game Fund	2,974,217.50	
Federal	<u>48,924.37</u>	3,023,141.87
<b>Sub-Program 05 – Fish</b>		
State Game Fund	3,282,221.61	
Aquatic Habitat Fund	83,551.06	
Federal	<u>64,518.64</u>	3,430,291.31
<b>Sub-Program 10 – Outdoor Education</b>		
General Fund	118,533.41	
Game Cash	585,020.46	
State Park Cash Revolving	<u>8,425.42</u>	711,979.29
<b>Sub-Program 16 – Non-Game &amp; Endangered Species</b>		
General Fund	301,936.98	
Non-Game & Endangered Species Fund	186,418.06	
Federal	<u>73,255.35</u>	561,610.39
<b>PROGRAM 336 – SUMMARY</b>		
General Fund	930,323.52	
State Game Fund	10,773,417.87	
State Park Cash Revolving	1,032,906.02	
Non-Game & Endangered Species Fund	186,418.06	
Aquatic Habitat Fund	83,551.06	
Federal	<u>186,698.36</u>	13,193,314.89
<b>Program 337 – Agency Administration</b>		
General Fund	565,585.12	
Cowboy Trail Fund	308.27	
State Game Fund	1,661,593.94	
State Park Cash Revolving	773,746.54	
Habitat Cash	107,935.96	
Aquatic Habitat	<u>50.04</u>	3,109,219.87
<b>Program 338 – Niobrara Scenic River</b>		
<b>Local Management Council</b>		
General Fund	100,000.00	100,000.00
<b>Program 549 – Park Administration &amp; Operation</b>		
General Fund	4,169,495.71	
State Park Cash Revolving	8,812,385.84	
Nebr. Outdoor Rec. Dev. Fund	(22,995.66)	
Federal	<u>3,020.00</u>	12,961,987.69
<b>Program 550 – Planning &amp; Trails Coordination</b>		
General Fund	<u>318,104.53</u>	318,104.53
<b>Program 617</b>		
<b>– Engineering, Area Maintenance &amp; Snowmobile</b>		
General Fund	2,234,546.14	
State Game Fund	53,771.37	
State Park Cash Revolving	1,691,896.64	
Snowmobile Trail Cash Fund	2,325.00	
Aquatic Habitat Fund	<u>10,137.94</u>	3,992,677.09
<b>Program 628 – Credit Card Discount</b>		
State Game Fund	3,374.59	
State Park Cash Revolving	<u>41,354.08</u>	44,728.67
<b>TOTAL OPERATION COSTS – 1998</b>		<b>\$ 42,790,951.49</b>

## 1998 REVENUE

<b>Cowboy Trail Fund</b>		
Trail Fees	1,110.91	
Interest Earned – Investments	6,793.45	
Land Lease/Easements	1,528.00	
Other	615.00	
<b>Total Cowboy Trail Cash Fund</b>		<b>\$ 10,047.31</b>
<b>Environmental Trust Fund</b>		
Transferred Income	9,444,994.00	
Interest	742,935.55	
Other	50.00	
<b>Total Environmental Trust Fund</b>		<b>10,187,979.55</b>
<b>State Game Cash Fund Income</b>		
Hunting Activities (Lifetime Hunt)	6,108,258.58	
Fishing Activities (Lifetime Fish)	3,011,788.24	
Big Horn Sheep Fee	68,840.00	
State & Local Reimbursements	920.24	
Federal Reimbursements	4,123,592.75	
NEBRASKALAND Magazine		
Subscriptions	557,149.29	
Advertising	<u>6,675.27</u>	573,824.56
Calendars, books, slides, etc.	125,536.50	
Sale of surplus property	89,133.35	
Land lease and crop income	214,648.01	
Boating registrations	585,245.95	
Incidentals	206,376.04	
Liquidated and property damage	80,664.06	
Interest earned on investments	618,891.02	
Cash Gifts	153,915.88	
Grants, Other Agencies (federal & state)	180,459.08	
Entrance Admissions	<u>18,877.73</u>	16,140,971.99
<b>Total State Game Fund</b>		<b>16,140,971.99</b>
<b>State Park Cash Revolving Fund Income</b>		
Park Entry Permits	3,151,014.50	
Ice Fishing Shelter	10.00	
Property & Liquidated Damages	3,021.72	
Interest earned on investments	398,873.11	
Camping fees, cabin lots, etc.	1,876,772.02	
Rental of cabins & lodge rooms	2,879,547.75	
Concession leases and sales by lessee	94,718.59	
Swimming pool admissions	229,855.89	
Entry admissions	200,755.74	
Use fees (trail rides, etc.)	574,794.13	
Concession sales, leases and agency facilities	487,357.05	
Food Service – Fort Robinson	198,582.10	
Cookout Income – all areas	25,039.22	
Food Service – Platte River	86,474.71	
Food Service – Mahoney	1,180,084.09	
Cash gifts	381,346.84	
Sale of surplus property	198,014.76	
Adjustments to prior fiscal year	5,476.47	
Catering	404,424.52	
Grocery store & snack items	358,575.36	
Rental items (linen, dishes, tables)	5,395.67	
Incidentals	315,551.69	
Gratuities	66,445.14	
Grants	369,668.06	
Federal reimbursement	<u>29,179.13</u>	13,518,978.26
<b>Total Park State Park Cash Revolving Fund</b>		<b>13,518,978.26</b>
<b>Nebraska Habitat Fund Income</b>		
Habitat Stamps	1,633,675.61	
Waterfowl Stamp	2,456.90	
Interest earned on investments	246,892.29	
Federal reimbursements	2,064,283.00	
Incidentals	4,857.03	
Cash gifts	57,282.70	
Crop/Pasture	75,782.28	
Grants	14,772.50	
Sale of surplus property	<u>6,020.90</u>	4,106,023.21
<b>Total Habitat Cash Fund</b>		<b>4,106,023.21</b>
<b>Non-Game &amp; Endangered Species Cash Fund Income</b>		
Cash gifts	804.00	
Federal reimbursements	24,412.68	
Interest earned on investments	20,862.04	
Non-game donations	87,837.54	
Grants	28,284.12	
Incidentals-adjustments to prior fiscal year	<u>5,964.21</u>	198,184.59
<b>Total Non-Game &amp; Endangered Species Cash Fund</b>		<b>198,184.59</b>
<b>Nebraska Snowmobile Cash Fund Income</b>		
75% of registration fee, less issuing fee	8,887.40	
Interest earned on investments	<u>5,971.76</u>	14,859.16
<b>Total Nebraska Snowmobile Cash Fund</b>		<b>14,859.16</b>
<b>Nebr. Outdoor Recreation Development Cash Fund</b>		
1¢ tax on cigarettes	1,337,761.57	
Interest earned on investments	151,671.74	
Surplus Property	8,764.26	
Incidentals	<u>270.00</u>	1,498,467.57
<b>Total Nebr. Outdoor Recreation Development Cash Fund</b>		<b>1,498,467.57</b>
<b>Trail Development Assistance Fund Income</b>		
Interest earned on investments	3,485.30	
Transferred income (General Fund appropriation)	<u>0,000.00</u>	3,485.30
<b>Total Trail Development Assistance Cash Fund</b>		<b>3,485.30</b>
<b>Aquatic Habitat Fund</b>		
Federal reimbursement	120,340.59	
Interest earned on investments	85,531.40	
Aquatic Stamp	1,034,965.75	
Cash Gift	2,464.85	
Incidentals	<u>60.50</u>	1,241,363.09
<b>Total Aquatic Habitat Cash Fund</b>		<b>1,241,363.09</b>
<b>Federal Funds</b>		
Bureau of Reclamation, etc.	790,117.10	
National Recreation Trails Fund, etc.	<u>224,960.69</u>	1,015,077.79
<b>Total Federal Funds received</b>		<b>1,015,077.79</b>
<b>Total Cash &amp; Federal Income Received during 1998</b>		<b>\$ 48,005,532.44</b>



**1998 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

Area of Expenditure	2332 Game Cash	2333 Park Cash	2334 Habitat Cash	2338 NORDA Cash	2339 Trail Devel. Assistance	2341 NE Aquatic Habitat	4332 Federal Funds	4333 Recreational Trail Funds	Total
Acquisition of Habitat Land	184,978.00		1,334,354.64						1,519,332.64
<b>IMPROVEMENT &amp; RENOVATIONS</b>									
Chadron SP				25,790.94					25,790.94
Fort Robinson SP	3,152.00	8,020.00		237,598.48					248,770.48
Mahoney SP		159,971.63		455,383.89					615,355.52
Niobrara SP				99,096.53					99,096.53
Platte River SP		385.14		158,741.04					159,126.18
Ponca SP		36,559.98		2,985.00					39,544.98
Fort Kearny SHP				225.00					225.00
Indian Cave SP		6,696.60							6,696.60
Park Areas General				97,866.50					97,866.50
Branched Oak SRA	290,060.64	70,357.76		70,268.13		7,139.74			437,826.27
Buffalo Bill SHP				69,633.23					69,633.23
Conestoga SRA						8,742.66			8,742.66
Fort Kearny SRA		233.41							233.41
Fremont SRA		7,500.00		136,470.71					143,970.71
Johnson Lake SRA				14,099.03					14,099.03
Lake McConaughy SRA	164.28	71,144.56		64,446.83		571.55			136,327.22
Lake Ogallala SRA						5,977.73			5,977.73
Lake Maloney SRA		533.72							533.72
Lake Minatare SRA				2,409.14		48,572.21			50,981.35
Lewis & Clark SRA		237,170.70		29,777.80					266,948.50
Louisville SRA		91,853.26		566.44		25,576.00			117,995.70
Medicine Creek SRA		233.41							233.41
Memphis SRA		19,398.00				19,398.00			38,796.00
Merritt Reservoir SRA		52,810.73							52,810.73
Mormon Island SRA		466.55		571.81					1,038.36
Olive Creek SRA						72,594.84			72,594.84
Pawnee SRA		347.51							347.51
Sherman SRA & WMA	2,040.00								2,040.00
Swanson SRA		1,933.40							1,933.40
Victoria Springs SRA				2,178.95					2,178.95
Verdon SRA		313,485.63				73,833.45			387,319.08
Wagon Train SRA						67,600.50			67,600.50
Wildcat Hills SRA		1,042.52							1,042.52
WMA's General	14,513.14								14,513.14
Alexandria SRA	2,200.00								2,200.00
Ballards Marsh WMA	5,275.08								5,275.08
Bazile Creek WMA	4,472.00								4,472.00
Burchard WMA	14,183.36								14,183.36
Bobcat WMA	1,307.61								1,307.61

1998 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS									
Area of Expenditure	2332 Game Cash	2333 Park Cash	2334 Habitat Cash	2338 NORDA Cash	2339 Trail Devel. Assistance	2341 NE Aquatic Habitat	4332 Federal Funds	4333 Recreational Trail Funds	Total
Calamus WMA	15,036.35								15,036.35
Cedar Canyon WMA	11,933.00								11,933.00
Clear Creek WMA	2,104.64								2,104.64
Cottonwood-Steverson	8,944.05								8,944.05
Divoky WMA	3,870.16								3,870.16
Facus Springs WMA	7,293.00								7,293.00
Grove Lake WMA	1,700.00								1,700.00
Kissinger Basin WMA	2,066.10								2,066.10
Little Blue East WMA	4,627.20								4,627.20
Long Pine WMA	7,500.00								7,500.00
Meridian WMA	733.70								733.70
Parshall Bridge WMA	2,443.81								2,443.81
Rock Glen WMA	2,790.90								2,790.90
Smartweed Marsh WMA	7,365.60								7,365.60
Soldiers Creek	15,997.06								15,997.06
South Sacramento WMA	6,072.00								6,072.00
Southeast Sacramento	5,329.50								5,329.50
Salt Valley Lakes	3,438.78								3,438.78
Windmill SRA		1,198.14							1,198.14
Calamus Hatchery	5,129.41								5,129.41
Grove Trout Station	7,000.00								7,000.00
Central Office	48,990.09	14,330.20							63,320.29
District II	5,150.00								5,150.00
District IV	3,888.00								3,888.00
Indian Cave Motorboat Access	9,998.88	11,385.50							21,384.38
Verdel Boat Access	1,621.49								1,621.49
Cowboy Trail							459,900.58	161,418.51	621,319.09
White River Trail				547.85					547.85
Trail Assistance					46,814.00			63,542.08	110,356.08
Cottonmill Aq Prog							86,605.60		86,605.60
Rock Creek HP Watershed							94,008.03		94,008.03
TOTAL	713,369.83	1,107,058.35	1,334,354.64	1,468,657.30	46,814.00	330,006.68	640,514.21	224,960.59	5,865,735.60

**1998 DEER / ANTELOPE / ELK / TURKEY / BIGHORN PERMITS**

TYPE OF PERMIT	LANDOWNER	NONRESIDENT	RESIDENT	TOTAL	INCOME
Archery Antelope	4	31	304	339	\$ 10,280.00
Firearm Antelope	114	0	980	1,094	23,059.00
Total Antelope	118	31	1,284	1,433	33,339.00
Archery Deer	129	1,020	13,717	14,866	459,622.25
Firearm Deer	11,364	3,263	70,389	85,016	2,180,609.25
Total Deer	11,493	4,283	84,106	99,882	2,640,231.50
Archery Elk	0	0	0	0	0
Firearm Elk	8	0	58	66	6,675.20
Elk Applications (\$5 each)	0	0	1,390	1,390	7,645.00
Total Elk	8	0	1,448		14,320.20
Bighorn Sheep		Auction: 1	Lottery: 1	2	78,750.00
Bighorn Application Fee (\$20)			3,444		68,860.00
Total Bighorn Sheep		1	1	2	147,610.00
Fall Turkey - Archery	15	57	614	686	13,600.25
Fall Turkey - Firearm	273	274	4,673	5,220	95,869.00
Spring Turkey - Archery	20	314	2,142	2,476	53,627.50
Spring Turkey - Firearm	490	1,462	11,334	13,286	275,759.00
Total Turkey	798	2,107	18,763	21,668	438,855.75
Grand Total	12,069	6,422	109,045	127,884	\$3,274,356.45

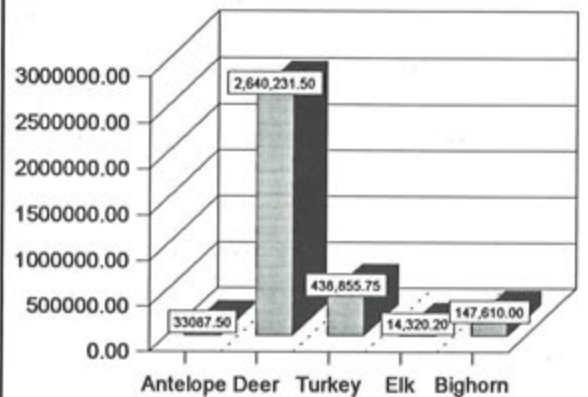
Permit Fees: Landowner - Turkey, \$8.25; Deer & Antelope, \$11; Elk, \$22.40; Nonresident - Turkey, \$56; Deer, \$150.00; Antelope, \$112; Resident - Turkey, \$16.75; Deer & Antelope, \$22.25; Elk, \$112; Elk Application Fee - \$5.50

**1998 PERMITS & STAMPS SOLD**

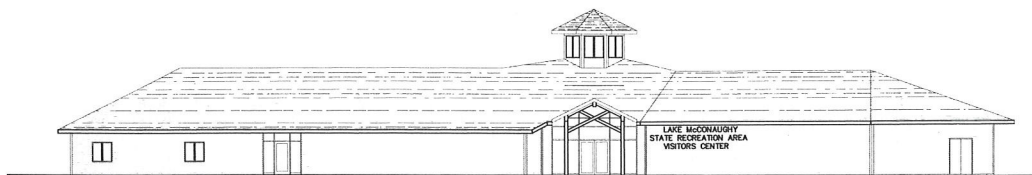
TYPE OF PERMIT	NUMBER SOLD*	AMOUNT*
Resident Fish	134,641	\$ 1,716,672.75
3-Day Resident Fish	3,276	27,027.00
Resident Hunt	62,092	589,874.00
Res. Fish-Hunt Combo	45,120	981,360.00
Nonresident Hunt	26,618	1,463,990.00
Nonres. Annual Fish	6,660	233,100.00
3-Day Nonres. Fish	21,218	228,093.50
Aquatic Habitat Stamp	203,510	1,017,550.00
Resident Fur Harvest	7,528	126,094.00
Habitat Stamp	153,404	1,534,040.00
Annual Park Permit	149,285	2,089,990.00
Daily Park Permit	220,321	550,802.50
Duplicate Park Permit	44,611	312,277.00
Misc. Transactions		3,711.91
Total	1,079,284	10,874,582.66

\*Figures are for calendar year 1998, based on data available as of March 30, 1999.

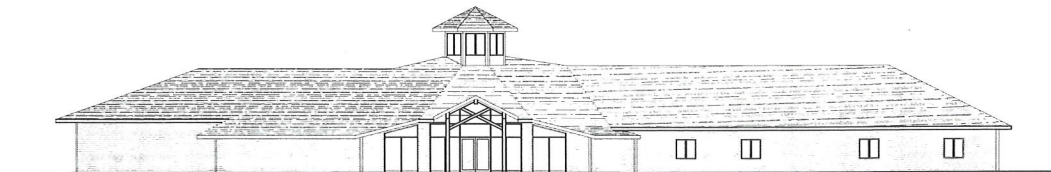
**1998 Big Game Income**







ENTRANCE ELEVATION



## ENGINEERING

Engineering Division's duties are similar to those of private engineering, architectural and surveying firms — providing professional, technical and planning assistance to the agency.

### Goals & Objectives

- ◆ Develop appropriate design solutions for engineering and architectural projects.
- ◆ Draw plans and write the specifications for bidding Commission construction projects.
- ◆ Administer construction contracts, conduct inspections, and write reports.
- ◆ Select and work with private consulting firms hired to assist the Commission.
- ◆ Furnish Cadastral surveys, prepare legal descriptions and provide construction survey layouts for agency projects.
- ◆ Produce construction specifications and handle record management.
- ◆ Provide technical support for agency technology applications.

Engineering and architectural designs are prepared for both new and repair capital construction projects, for competitive bidding and to facilitate construction. Surveying is done to estab-

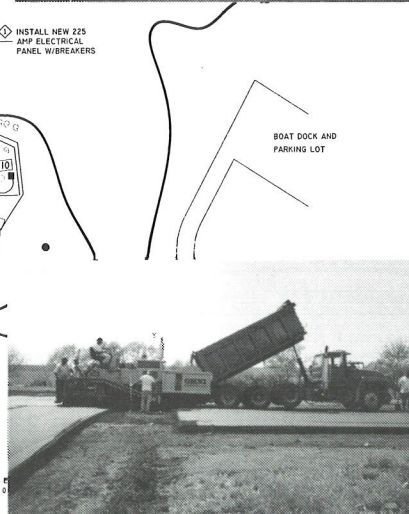
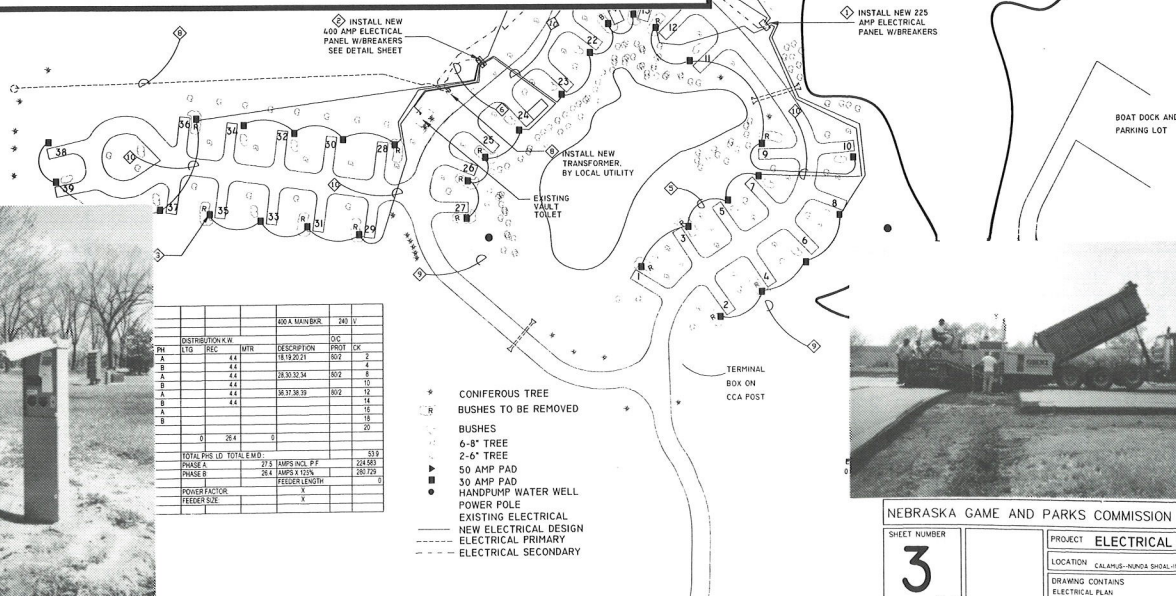
lish a legal boundary for newly purchased areas or gather elevations for new construction. The division also provides computer hardware and software setup support for other divisions.

The division is also involved in the agency Internet, World Wide Web, HomePage, E-Mail, AutoCAD and basic operator training need to access and use these features.

During the past year, the Engineering Division has continued to expand its role in providing technical support for agency information technology applications.

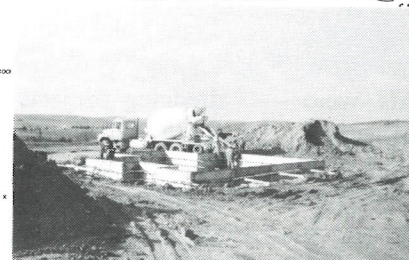
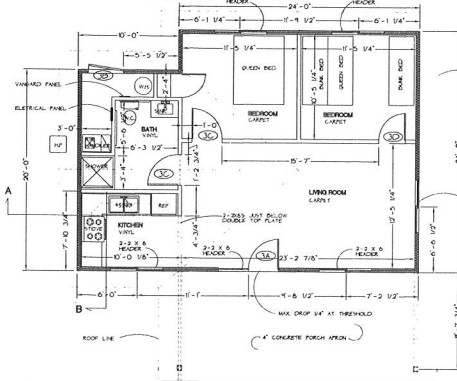
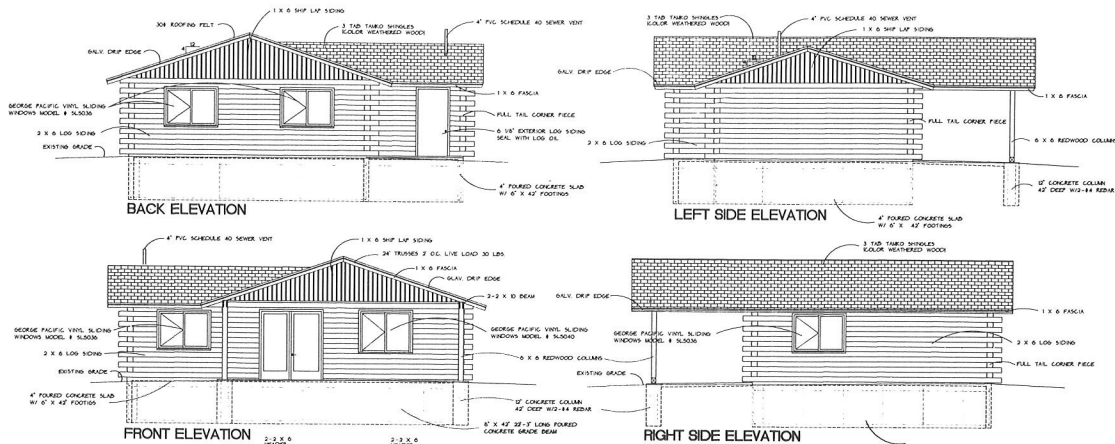
The division manages the Lincoln office local area network (LAN) and Internet for more than 120 users. Internet applications include the HomePage/ Web site and electronic mail services. Engineering also provides ongoing computer hardware/software technical support, training and custom application development for other divisions and personal computer users.

NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS COMMISSION		ENGINEERING DIVISION
SHEET NUMBER	PROJECT VISITORS CENTER	LOCATION LAKE McCONAUGHY SRA.
OF	SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"	DESIGN/DRAWN BY NWJ
		DATE DEC 98



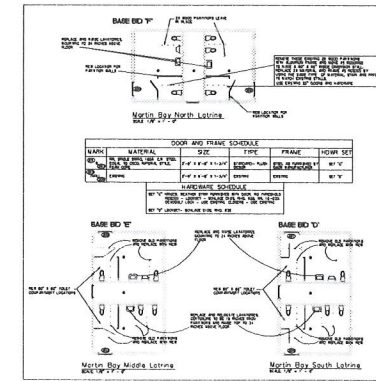
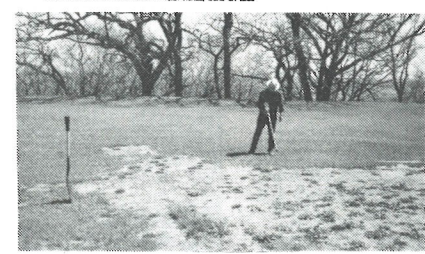
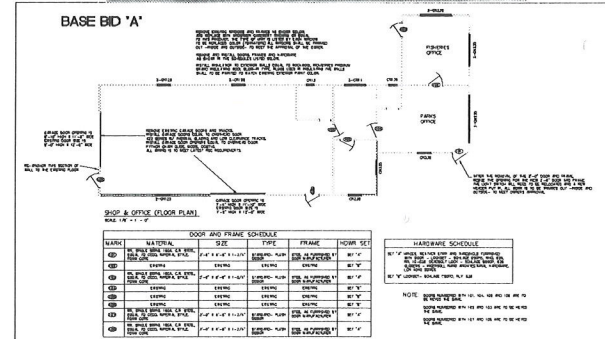
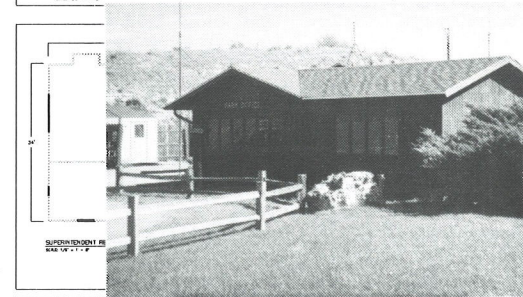
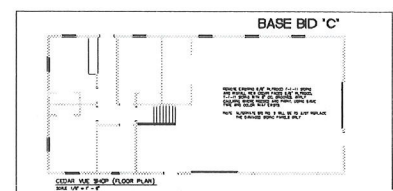
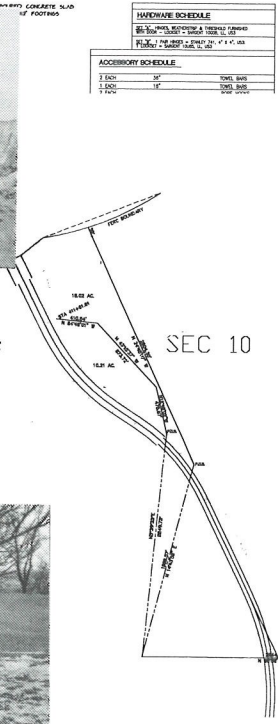
NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS COMMISSION		ENGINEERING DIVISION
SHEET NUMBER	PROJECT ELECTRICAL UPGRADE	LOCATION CALAMUS-MONGA SHOAL-INSTALLATION PLAN
3	SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"	DESIGN/DRAWN BY NWJ
OF 7		DATE DEC 98





**COMMON AREA**  
 COMMENCING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SECTION 10, TOWNSHIP 14 NORTH, RANGE 30 WEST OF THE 6TH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, THENCE NORTH 89°50'00\"/>

**DECEDED AREA**  
 COMMENCING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SECTION 10, TOWNSHIP 14 NORTH, RANGE 30 WEST OF THE 6TH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, THENCE NORTH 89°50'00\"/>



**GENERAL SCOPE OF WORK (LATRINE BUILDINGS)**  
 THE WORK SHALL INCLUDE THE CONSTRUCTION OF TWO (2) LATRINE BUILDINGS, EACH 10' X 10' IN SIZE. THE BUILDINGS SHALL BE CONSTRUCTED OF CONCRETE BLOCK AND SHALL HAVE A GABLED ROOF. THE BUILDINGS SHALL BE FINISHED WITH VINYL SIDING AND SHALL HAVE A CONCRETE FLOOR. THE BUILDINGS SHALL BE LOCATED ON THE COMMON AREA, AS SHOWN ON THE SURVEY MAP. THE WORK SHALL ALSO INCLUDE THE INSTALLATION OF TOILETS, SINKS, AND SHOWERS IN EACH BUILDING. THE WORK SHALL BE COMPLETED BY THE DATE SPECIFIED IN THE CONTRACT.

**APPROVED** \_\_\_\_\_ **NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS COMMISSION** **ENGINEERED** \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTOR** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **1** **OF 1** **PROJECT: VARIOUS BUILDING RENOVATIONS**

**LOCATION: LAKE McCONAUGHY S.R.A.**

**DRAWING CONTAINS:** FLOOR PLANS OF BUILDINGS, SCOPE OF WORK FOR EACH BUILDING AND LOCATION MAP. **DATE:** 6/1998



# FISHERIES

## Anglers Set Six State Records

A 93-lb. paddlefish, taken from the tailwaters at Gavins Point, heads the list of new Nebraska state record fish caught in 1998.

Other record-breakers caught on hook-and-line included a 5-oz. stonecat, caught in the North Fork of the Elkhorn River and a 6-lb., 9-oz. burbot, taken from the Missouri River in Cedar County.

A 21-lb., 14-oz. northern pike taken from Rock Creek Lake set a new state record in the bow and arrow category, while new records were established in the surface spearing category for common carp (21 lbs. from Big Alkali Lake in Cherry County) and bigmouth buffalo (11 lbs. 8 oz. from a Missouri River oxbow).

## MA Awards Highest Since 1985

For the second year in a row, over 4,000 Master Angler awards were issued. This provides real testimony to the excellent fishing enjoyed in Nebraska in recent years.

Chiefly due to the record high number (1,155) of wiper awards (hybrid white bass x striped bass), 1998 edged out 1997 for the second highest number of Master Anglers all time. There were 4,235 awards issued for fish caught in 1998. See chart on p. 11.

## Aquatic Habitat Program Active

The Aquatic Habitat Program had many accomplishments in its second year of existence.

- ✓ Basin excavation, land construction, outlet construction, jetty construction and shoreline stabilization were completed on Hitchcock Park Pond in Omaha, Verdon Lake near Falls City and Cottonmill Lake at Kearney.
- ✓ Louisville SRA lake #2 was renovated to remove rough fish.
- ✓ Rock reef habitat was added to Lake Minatare near Scottsbluff.

- ✓ Dredging was done on Two Rivers lakes #4 and #5 near Yutan.
- ✓ An aeration system was added to the north basin of Lake Ogallala.
- ✓ Major progress was made constructing offshore breakwaters at Branched Oak Reservoir near Raymond.
- ✓ Design and engineering was 90% completed on rehabilitation projects at Pibel Lake near Erickson, Olive Creek Lake near Crete and Wagon Train Lake near Hickman.
- ✓ Finally, progress was made on dredging projects at Smith Lake, south of Rushville, and Rock Creek Lake, northwest of Benkelman; aeration projects for lakes #1 and #2 at Two Rivers and Louisville Lake #2, and complete rehabilitation projects at Willow Creek near Pierce, Memphis Lake near Memphis and Glenn Cunningham Reservoir near Omaha.

## Aquatic Habitat Program Named Nation's Best in 1998

The Administrators Section of the American Fisheries Society named the Nebraska Aquatic Habitat Program the "Outstanding Sport Fish Restora-

tion" fisheries management project in 1998.

Phillip Durocher, president of the Administrators Section and director of Inland Fisheries for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, presented the award to the Fisheries Division at the October Commission meeting.

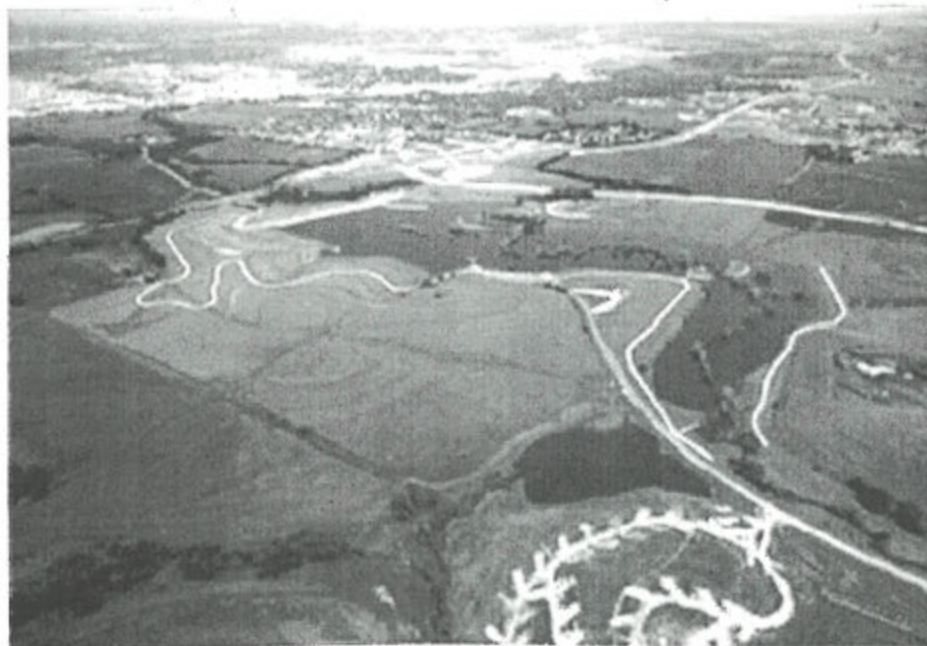
## Award-Winning Walnut Creek Lake Completed and Ready to Open

Thanks to cooperative efforts of the Commission, the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District and their consultants, a lake now exists that maximizes fisheries habitat.

The 105-acre impoundment, located about 1 mile southwest of Papillion, features two large islands, three offshore breakwaters, a breakwater fishing jetty and two sediment dikes.

These features will reduce shoreline erosion, provide angler access and promote good water clarity by reducing sedimentation. Prior to filling, thousands of tires, wood pallets, cedar trees and concrete blocks were strategically anchored to the lake's bottom.

The lake design and aquatic habitat features received a 1998 Engineering Excellence Award from the American



*Aerial shows award-winning Winters Creek Lake, cited for design and habitat.*



Consulting Engineers Council. Stocked in 1997 and 1998, and the lake will open to public use March 1, 1999.

### Fish Stocking Provides What Mother Nature Can't

Nebraska's five hatcheries produced approximately 9.8 million fish for stocking in the waters, where natural reproduction was thought to be insufficient or even lacking.

This accounted for 23 different species of fish, stocked into 210 different public bodies of water in Nebraska. Included were 4.6 million walleye fingerlings, 2.2 million yellow perch, 1.3 million white bass x striped bass hybrids (wipers), 440,000 rainbow trout and 258,000 largemouth bass.

Two new strains of brown trout (the Seeforellen and Wild Rose) are being introduced into the Lake McConaughy and Lake Ogallala system. Both strains are effective predators on alewife in Lake Michigan.

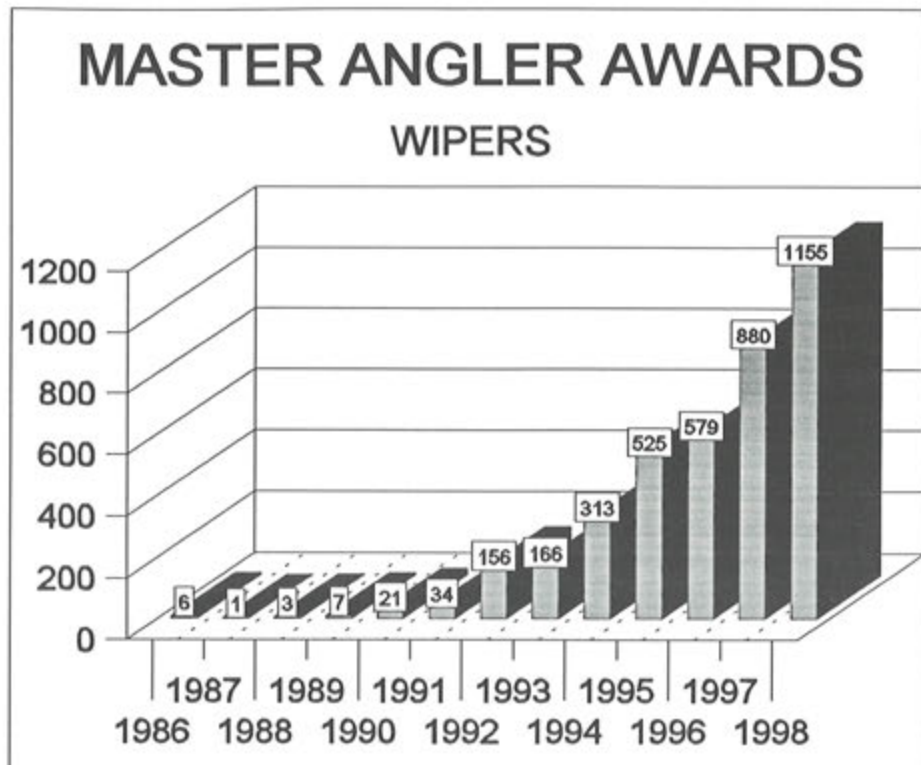
### Kids Fishing Events Popular

Eleven kids fishing events were held in 1998. Some celebrated Free Fishing Day (May 16) and another commemorated National Fishing Week (June 1-7). Still others were held simply to give kids an opportunity to catch fish and have fun.

Trout were stocked for these events at Carter P. Johnson Lake at Fort Robinson State Park near Crawford, a Valentine Fish Hatchery pond, and the golf course pond in Kearney. Catfish were stocked at Fremont SRA, Columbus City Lake, Fort Kearny SRA, Windmill SRA, a Grand Island city lake, Two Rivers SRA, Louisville SRA and Oak Lake in Lincoln.

### Management Biologists Collect Important Information

A key to providing good fishing is determining what management practices (e.g. harvest restrictions, habitat manipulations, stocking) are working and what practices are not working.



Each spring and fall, management biologists sample fish populations to determine numbers, sizes, body condition, age composition and growth rate. Gill nets, frame nets and electrofishing boats are used to sample fish in reservoirs and lakes, while seines and backpack electrofishing units are used to assess stream fish populations.

In 1998, 115 reservoirs and lakes and 26 streams (mostly trout streams in the Panhandle and Sandhills) were sampled statewide.

### Cooperative Study Will Reveal Secrets of Sandhill Lakes

Fisheries has entered into a cooperative study with South Dakota State University to examine characteristics of Sandhill lakes in north-central Nebraska. The study will examine biological, physical and chemical factors to determine what factors are responsible for producing good yellow perch, bluegill and black crappie populations.

### Creel Surveys Determine Angling Benefits of Fisheries Management

Each year temporary employees (mostly college students majoring in fisheries) are employed by the Com-

mission to talk to anglers. Through these interviews, changes in the quality of fishing and influences of management practices can be assessed. In 1998, creel surveys were conducted at 19 lakes and reservoirs, the North Platte River and the Keystone Canal. Included was a special underwater spearfishing creel survey at Lake McConaughy.

### Home Valley Lake Renovated To Remove Carp

Recently acquired Home Valley Lake, near Cottonwood-Steverson lakes in southwest Cherry County, was renovated to remove a fish community dominated by common carp. Large-mouth bass, bluegill, black crappie and yellow perch were restocked there.

### Stream Fish Collection Records Computerized and Mapped

In 1996, a process to locate all Nebraska fish collection records began. A database computer program was obtained, and a Nebraska fish distribution database was created.

Since then, this database has been used frequently to fulfill numerous requests for information. Requests have



come from NGPC personnel, other agencies and private parties. Meetings with agency personnel from Colorado and Wyoming identified a need for maps of current and historical fish distributions of the entire Platte River Basin. Fish collection databases from all three states have been combined and a set of maps contrasting historical and current fish distributions is under development.

### **Brook Trout Expanding In Pine Ridge Streams**

Although not known for trout fishing, streams in Nebraska's Panhandle offer fishing opportunity for rainbow, brown and brook trout. For years, the NGPC stocked catchable rainbow in many streams in the Pine Ridge.

However, fisheries biologists found few fish to be caught by anglers. In the early 1990s, the agency began introducing brook trout into several streams in an attempt to develop self-sustaining populations that would provide anglers a special angling opportunity.

Recent surveys found fishable populations of brook trout in Soldiers, West Ash, East Ash Creek, Big Bordeaux and Chadron creeks. These streams provide anglers some excellent wild trout angling and received some promotion in an article in the Omaha World Herald.

### **Hamburg Bend Fills a Void For Missouri River Fishes**

Hamburg Bend mitigation site is functioning just as fisheries biologists hoped it would. Sampling has shown that the numbers of several key benthic (bottom-dwelling) minnows, including speckled chubs, silver chubs, flathead minnows and plains minnows are at levels not seen in the channelized river adjacent to the site since the early 1970s.

Benthic minnows make up an important component of the diet of many native Missouri River fishes, including channel and flathead catfish and

shovelnose and the endangered pallid sturgeon.

### **Channel Catfish Are Making Comeback in the Missouri River**

Since commercial fishing for channel catfish was closed on Jan. 1, 1992, the numbers of larger catfish have rebounded to levels last seen in the 1960's. The frequency of channel catfish greater than 16 inches long in our netting samples has increased by more than three times for several sections of the Missouri River in Nebraska. Anglers have begun to notice the changes and are excited about the future of catfishing in the Missouri River.

### **New Paddlefish Season Format Has Been Well-Received**

This was the second year Nebraska and South Dakota issued free tags for the paddlefish archery and snagging seasons. The response to the tags has been overwhelmingly supportive.

Because the number of paddlefish harvested the last two seasons was less than the harvest quota of 1,600, fisheries personnel in both states will recommend increasing the number of tags issued for the year 2000 seasons.

### **Adult Pallid Sturgeon Stocked in the Platte River**

In mid-April, 84 pallid sturgeon (an endangered species) raised at the Gavins Point National Fish Hatchery were stocked in the lower Platte River at Cottonwood camping area at Two Rivers SRA (about 7 miles upstream from the confluence of the Elkhorn River mouth).

In addition to carrying color hatchery marks (Visible Implant Fluorescent Elastomer Tags injected in the under side of the head skin area) all pallids were micro-tagged and pit tagged. Ten of these six-year-old pallid sturgeon were fitted with internal radio transmitters and five of the ten were also fitted with sonic tags in case the sturgeon migrated downstream.

Sturgeon movements, including water depth, velocity and temperature will be monitored by a UN-L masters degree candidate.

### **Platte Instream Flows Granted**

In June, the director of the Department of Water Resources released his decision on the Commission's five Platte River instream flow applications, after a 41-day water rights hearing and nearly 4½ years after the applications were submitted.

One application requesting instream flows to protect riparian wet meadows along the central Platte River between Overton and Chapman was denied on the basis of insufficient technical evidence as well as lack of statutory authority to protect instream flows for out-of-stream fish and wildlife uses.

The Commission's request for river flows of 2,000 to 2,400 cubic feet per second (cfs) for whooping crane stop-over habitat during fall and spring migration periods was partially granted with 1,350 cfs approved. During spring and fall migration periods, instream appropriations approved for whooping cranes range from 1,350 to 1,500 cfs.

However, portions of these appropriations had been granted to the Central Platte Natural Resources District (CPNRD) in 1992. The Commission's request of 1,000 cfs (including the 500-600 cfs previously awarded to the CPNRD) to protect the fish community of the central Platte River was mostly granted for the summer months. Some reductions from 1,000 cfs to 800 and 900 cfs were required by new statutory limitations during August.

In the lower Platte River reach between the confluence of the Loup River to the Elkhorn River, the agency's full request of 1,800 cfs was approved. In the lowest reach between the Elkhorn River and the mouth of the Platte near Plattsmouth, the request of 3,700 cfs was approved except for slight reductions to 3,500 and 3,200 in August and September due to statutory limitations.



# INFORMATION & EDUCATION

The information arm of the agency, I&E provides service to other divisions as well as to the public. I&E publishes *NEBRASKAland Magazine*, *Trail Tales*, *Outdoor Nebraska*, the annual hunting, fishing and boating guides, numerous brochures, pamphlets and other printed materials; produces TV and radio shows and news spots, and designs exhibits for state parks and other Commission areas, State Fair, and sports & travel shows.

## ART PROJECTS

Staff artists designed and laid out the popular *Trail Tales* for fourth graders, as well as the Commission's main publication, *NEBRASKAland Magazine*, the ever-popular *NEBRASKAland Calendar*, the *Outdoor Planner for Project WILD*, and a variety of other publications, including the annual hunting, fishing and boating guides, and big game information. Artists also prepared new displays for sport shows and State Fair, plus several smaller mall exhibits.

## NEBRASKAland MAGAZINE

*NEBRASKAland Magazine* published nine regular 52-page issues and a special 110-page combined August-September issue, *NEBRASKA's Hunting Heritage*. This comprehensive guide to upland, big game and waterfowl hunting in the state also presented a detailed history of wildlife and land use practices, perspectives on the future of hunting and a guide to resources for hunters.

In addition to a wide variety of articles on hunting, fishing, natural history, parks and outdoor recreation, the magazine carried several special sections, including the 18-page "Focus on Lake McConaughy" in May and an 18-page section on the Nebraska Environmental Trust in the July. The Trust article was overprinted for use as a 16-page informational brochure. The May issue also included a pullout map of the state's recreational trails. Several articles were reprinted by other publications and used in several university and public school classes.

In July, subscription rates went from \$14 to \$16 for a year; \$30 for two years, and \$44 for three years. The single copy price increased from \$2 to \$2.50. Several

direct-mail and newspaper insert subscription promotions proved successful. The magazine finished the year "in the black," generating income exceeding costs, including production and salaries.

The *Outdoor Nebraska* tabloid was included in the April and October issues and was distributed through a network of vendors and other outlets, featuring timely information and news.

The magazine has approximately 40,000 subscribers, and renewals remain about 70%. Newsstand distribution totaled about 1,500 copies per issue.

## NEWS PROGRAM

About 300 news stories were issued during the year as specials or in a weekly packet to newspapers, radio and TV stations, magazines and other outdoor media. News is also transmitted electronically to the Associated Press, several daily newspapers and the Nebraska Press Association's bulletin board, which acts as a wire service to weekly papers in the state.

GPC NEWS, the employee newsletter informs and educates staff on various aspects of agency work. Produced by I&E, most articles are written by employees from all divisions. Other news department duties include: Coordinating the Outdoor Alley exhibit at the State Fair and producing the permit agent

## WEB SITE

The Commission's web site continues to grow in popularity with outdoor recreation enthusiasts. The site went on line in October 1994, when it averaged about 40 visitors a day. Now, it has logged over 1.2 million visitors and averages about 10,000 visitors per week, who make about 35,000 "hits" a day. Maintained by the Webmaster in the Engineering Division, the site offers over 1,300 pages of information, photographs and graphics about the state's wildlife, parks, habitat, hunting, fishing, other outdoor recreation, activities and the agency itself.

It includes over 900 images of Nebraska wildlife and parks. People can interact with each other and with agency employees to receive rapid responses to questions and share ideas, experiences and other information. The weekly Out-

door Report supplies the latest information about outdoor activities across the state, provided by conservation officers and other field personnel. An Outdoor Forum gives visitors a chance to ask questions online and have them answered by a Commission expert.

The web site includes a secure server with online transaction capability. A catalog allows users to purchase products such as hats, T-shirts, publications and postcards, as well as subscription services for *NEBRASKAland Magazine*. In 1998 it brought in nearly \$4,500, with nearly 200 *NEBRASKAland* subscriptions sold online. That was a 50% increase over 1997.

An online version of the magazine includes information on upcoming issues, special publications, past articles and the opportunity to send a "virtual postcard." Beginning in 1998, several types of permits could be purchased online, using a credit card. More than 1,400 permits were sold, totaling over \$62,000.

## TV & RADIO

In April, the Commission's *Outdoor Nebraska* TV program completed its second season on the Nebraska Educational Television Network. According to NETV research, *Outdoor Nebraska* consistently ranks among the most viewed shows on the network. The show ranked third in the Association for Conservation Information's video competition. It began its third season October 15, under funding provided by the Union Pacific Railroad.

Beside *Outdoor Nebraska*, the agency uses video news releases, as well as appearances on stations in Lincoln, Omaha and North Platte to inform viewers on G&PC news. Weekly spots on KHGI in Kearney are also being explored.

The Commission's weekly radio program continues to air weekly on over 50 stations in Nebraska and in surrounding states. Late in the year, the format was updated. While it still runs 10 minutes, music was changed to more contemporary arrangements. The old analog reel-to-reel tapes were replaced by digital mini disc recorder/playback units, similar to CDs, greatly improving the sound quality.

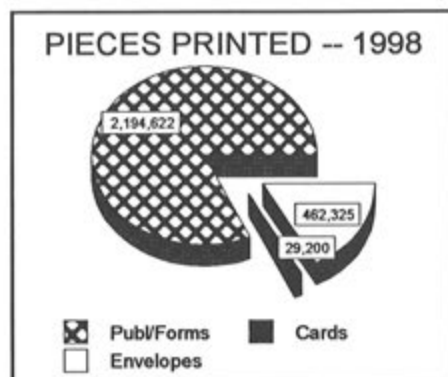
Both the TV and radio shows continue to receive positive audience feedback.



## PUBLICATIONS

Printing and publishing manages the production of more than 450 different brochures and pamphlets, as well as various other agency publications and over 450 forms. Publications range from full-color brochures to one and two-color pamphlets, stationery and short-run technical publications. I&E staff provides assistance to other divisions to determine the best way to produce a given project.

The in-house print shop produced 577 jobs in 1998, including pamphlets, booklets, news releases, surveys, cards, envelopes, park tickets, camping registrations, various forms, and other materials.



The 2,686,1147 printed pieces included: 29,200 cards, 462,325 envelopes and 2,194,622 pamphlets and other publications. These included 35 jobs requiring 2 or 3 colors and ranged from print runs of 500 to 50,000. The acquisition of a Townsend two-color head for the 1650 Multilith press has expedited the multi-color jobs.

## HABITAT STAMP ART CONTEST

Bruce Becher of Wilbur won the Adult Division of the annual Habitat Stamp Art Contest with a watercolor of sandhill cranes, featured on the 1999 stamp.

There were about 1,000 entries in the three categories in the Youth Division of the contest. Selections of youth art are featured in an exhibit displayed at locations across the state. The Omaha Fish and Wildlife Club again donated contest awards: \$200 to the adult winner and \$50 to the three youth winners.

## MAIL & SHIPPING

I&E handled 827,964 pieces of outgoing mail and packages during the year, compared to 673,692 in 1997, up 23.9%. The total cost for mailing/shipping was

\$313,014.37 compared to \$288,256.92 the previous year. Average cost per piece was 37.8¢ down 5¢ per piece from 1997's 42.8¢ per piece.

First class pre-sort (mostly done at a pre-sort house) resulted in a savings of \$5,308.24 for 207,013 pieces of mail. Outgoing mail processed included: Bulk mail, 274,110 pieces at \$62,112.46; regular mail (including pre-sort), 543,289 pieces at \$207,614.38; UPS and other package services, 10,565 packages at \$40,287.53.

There were 2,848 general information requests compared to 3,880 filled in 1997, down 43.5%. Information packets were sent to approximately 14,074 nonresident hunters.

## PHOTO LIBRARY

Approximately 200 requests were received for illustrative materials, which were used for *NEBRASKAland Magazine*, various Commission publications, news releases, programs, etc.

Numerous requests were also processed from other government agencies, advertising agencies, publishing companies, and public relations firms across the country. A total of \$3,180.00 was received from commercial users.

Photo supplied 630 roles of 36-exposure Fujichrome and Kodachrome film for use by staff photographers and others. Film provided primarily to other divisions included: Color print film -- 200 rolls of 12 exposures and 300 rolls of 24 exposures; 200 rolls of 24 exposure and 120 rolls of 36 exposure Ektachrome. Film totaled 42,000 exposures.

## REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Division information officers are located at Alliance, North Platte, and Omaha to provide information to regional media, also handling local programs and area articles and photos for *NEBRASKAland Magazine*.

### District I - Alliance

In addition to assignments for *NEBRASKAland Magazine*, duties of the Panhandle public information officer include local and statewide news releases and contacts with the area's 17 newspapers, 14 radio and 2 TV stations.

Other responsibilities include programs, information requests, workshops, shooting events, and acting as news direc-

tor for the Pressey High School State Championship and National Cornhusker Trap Shoot.

The district PIO and fisheries personnel staffed the Commission booth at the Denver Sportsmen's Expo. Workshop instruction included the rifle marksmanship class at Becoming an OutdoorsWoman; the annual school program at Wildcat Hills Nature Center and youth programs as requested. Counter sales increased 6.9% and totaled \$199,023.41 for 1998, including \$146,412.50 from big-game permits (up 36.4% from 1997).

### District IV - North Platte

The public information officer serves as manager of the district office, supervising the staff assistant, providing support to front office staff with issuing permits, over the counter information, and other public relations. Permit sales and other receipts totaled \$364,227.41 for 1998, up \$49,809.26 (16.8%) from 1997.

The District IV PIO contributes six or more articles to *NEBRASKAland Magazine* and directs the National Cornhusker High School Trap Shoot. The 29th annual shoot in May registered over 700 senior and junior high school shooters. Other activities include an on-location TV news feature, *Nebraska Outdoors*, which airs on Wednesday 6 p.m. news. The program has run weekly since September 1986.

Other duties include participation in seasonal radio shows, local news releases, Hunter Education, Project Wild and Becoming an OutdoorsWoman.

### Omaha Metro Office

This office is open seven days a week from March-October and Monday-Friday the rest of the year. Located in the Visitor Information Center at 1212 Deer Park Blvd. in Omaha, space is shared with the Department of Economic Development's Division of Tourism and the Spirit of the Prairie gift shop (DAS).

Counter sales totaled \$366,991.04, up 12.7% from 1997, an all-time high. Big-game permits accounted for \$219,215.54, a 14.6% increase from last year.

Staff continues statewide and local public relations efforts, and over 20 stations carried radio and TV programs each week, including personal appearances. Metro staff also coordinated such special events as the Omaha Bass Show, Omaha Boat, Sports & Travel Show and youth fishing clinics.



# LAW ENFORCEMENT

Enforcing the laws and regulations pertaining to fishing, hunting, boating and the state parks system, is a vital part of resource management.

Natural resources law enforcement is a 24-hour a day profession, requiring officers to maintain an office at home. They are fully credentialed peace officers and must complete training at the state training center in Grand Island, as well as field training under certified senior conservation officer trainers. That training focuses on promoting ethical use and enjoyment of our natural resources and enhancing voluntary compliance with statutes and regulations. Primary tools to achieve these ends are selective law enforcement, educational programs, and maintaining high visibility among users of our natural resources.

In 1998, the division had 56 positions – division administrator, assistant administrator, 6 supervisors, 45 field officers, staff conservation officer, secretary and staff assistant.

## On Patrol

Officers drove 1,449,183 miles on patrol, compared to 1,454,937 miles in 1997, at a cost of \$147,267.15, an average of 10.16¢ per mile, including all operating expenses such as gas, oil, tires and repairs. They used 100,948 gallons of gas for an average of 14.36 mpg compared to 14.75 mpg in 1997.

Patrol boats were used 1,408 hours, (1,529 hours in 1997) on boating law enforcement and to promote water safety. Average cost was \$12.16 per hour compared to \$7.48 in 1997.

## Contacts

In 1998 officers checked 29,316 hunters; 52,762 fishermen; 837 trap-

pers; 22,953 boats, and made 21,102 miscellaneous contacts, mostly park related. Some 4,301 complaints were investigated. Officers attended 840 meetings and gave 537 programs.

## Arrests & Convictions

In 1998, officers issued 1,099 warnings and made 3,684 arrests involving 4,118 counts, compared to 3,455 arrests in 1997 and to 3,522 in 1996. Of this total only 183 counts were dismissed for a conviction rate of 95.6%. Over the past 25 years, the number of arrests ranged from a low of 2,491 in 1973 to a high of 5,405 in 1980. Conviction percentages went from a low of 94.8% in 1985 to a high of 98.8% in 1972.

Nine persons were sentenced to 156 days in jail, compared to 41 individuals in 1997. Fines totaled \$164,747.00, while 1997 was \$133,469.50. Court costs totaled \$81,909.82 in 1998 and \$73,750.24

in 1997. Liquidated damages assessed were \$82,805.00, as compared to \$67,656.00 in 1997.

Violations increased in all but one age of eight age groups in 1998. These included: Age 10-20, 689 (+19.8%); age 21-30, 1,171 (+12.5%); age 31-40, 791 (+11.7%); age 41-50, 475 (+10%); age 51-60, 197 (+34.9%); age 61-70, 49 (-3.9%); age 71-80, 13, and age 81-90, 2.

## Expenses

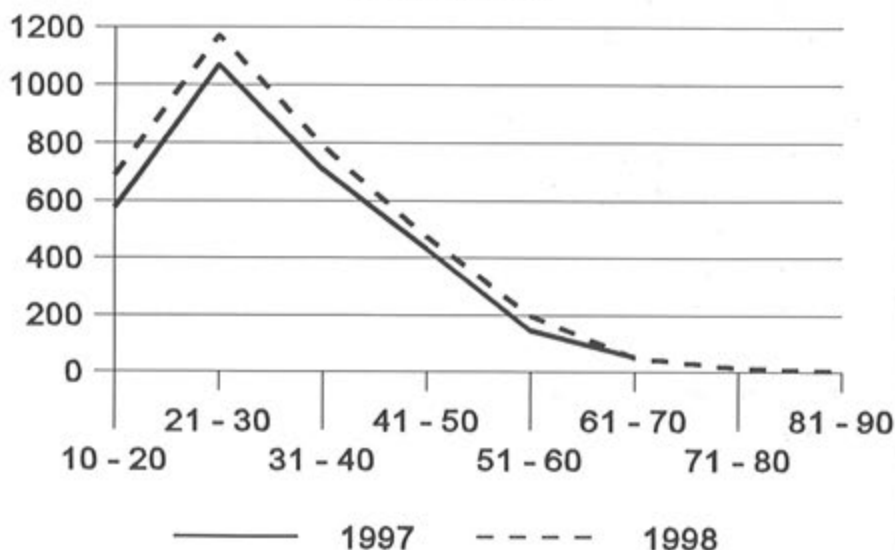
Travel expenses for 1998 were \$84,249.51, down from \$92,825.26 in 1997 (9.2%). The 1998 breakdown was \$54,177.52 for meals; \$16,061.43 for lodging; \$14,010.56 for telephone.

## Communications System

The statewide radio communications system is a network of bases and repeaters, which allow contact between district offices, mobile to office, and mobile to mobile. Operating expenses

## Violations By Age Group

1997 & 1998





totalled \$16,813.32 as compared to \$35,190.68 in 1997, a decrease of 52.2%, a continuing trend. The 1997 figure was down 21.8% from 1996 and 8.7% from 1995. The lower operating costs reflected reduced maintenance and repair costs – \$2,926.41 versus \$8,658.44 in 1997 and \$20,434.57 the previous year.

### Mandatory Road Checks

Conservation officers manned five mandatory road checks during 1998. They checked 646 vehicles, including 709 hunters, 5 fishermen, and 52 miscellaneous outdoor activities. They issued 27 citations for violations.

### Operation Game Thief

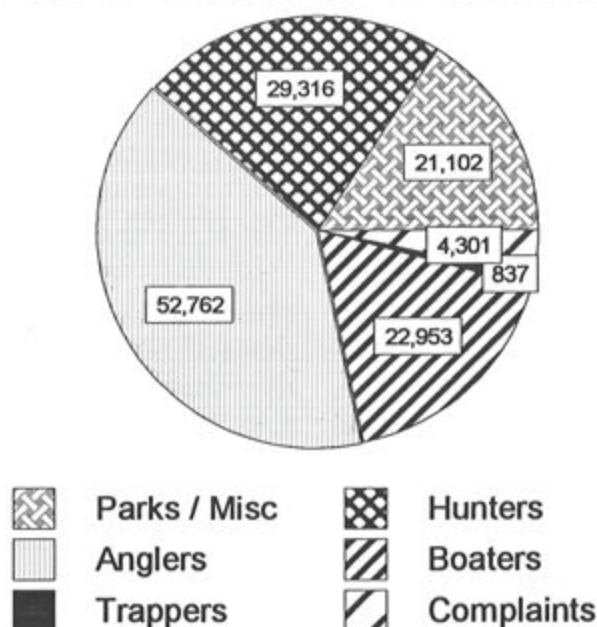
During its 18th year, calls to the toll-free Operation Game Thief hotline resulted in 79 investigations with 14 investigations resulting in 18 court citations. Fines and costs of \$2,305 were assessed, plus liquidated damages of \$7,755. Another 26 cases are pending disposition.

Wildlife involved included: 8 deer, 1 turkey, 4 geese, and 11 doves and 4 fish. The Nebraska Wildlife Protectors Association paid rewards in 10 cases, totaling \$925.00.

The Operation Game Thief hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. On Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., calls are answered by Law Enforcement Division, after hours and on weekends, dispatchers from the Nebraska State Patrol take calls and relay information to the appropriate conservation officer.

The Nebraska Wildlife Protectors Assn. conducted a banquet/auction and raised over \$5,000 to fund the OGT reward program.

## 1998 Officer Contacts



# OPERATIONS & CONSTRUCTION

Operations provides administrative, engineering, operational construction, maintenance and related work associated with the repair, renovation and construction on Commission areas. The division also maintains and oversees unmanned recreation areas in the Lincoln maintenance district. Duties fall into six general categories:

1. Recreation Area Maintenance – mowing, painting, building repair, garbage pickup, landscaping and tree planting.
2. Recreation Area Management – collecting fees, enforcing regulations and traffic control.
3. Utilities – construct and repair electric, water and sewer services.
4. Heavy Equipment – road maintenance, lake dredging, dam building, material and equipment hauling, welding and fabricating.
5. Building & Trades – building construction and repair, cabinet-making, concrete work and roofing.
6. Purchasing & Contracts – write specifications for materials and equipment, let small contracts to supplement force account work.

## Transportation & Equipment

Operations furnished a variety of equipment, such as air compressors, water pumps, tree spades, stump cutters, tractors, trucks, and loaders, for superintendents' temporary use.

Bulk supply purchases were delivered to the Lincoln shop, inventoried, and relayed to major park areas. Gasoline



*Site preparation for new visitor center at Lake McConaughy SRA was a big fall project for Operations crews.*

and diesel fuel were provided for agency vehicles from pumps at 3001 Y St. During the year 29,001 gal. of gasohol; 22,216 gal. of diesel; 34 qt. of oil, and 63 gal. of antifreeze were dispensed to agency vehicles. Average cost was .786 per gallon for gasohol and .518 for diesel. Equipment repairs cost \$85,100.

## Equipment Purchased

Equipment acquired included: John Deere 750C low ground pressure track dozer, forklift, one ton pickup, cable reel trailer, two tandem axle trailers, two 10-yard dump truck boxes with hydraulics, jib boom, construction forks, and couplers for wheel loaders.

## Eugene T. Mahoney State Park

An anonymous donor provided funds through the Game and Parks Foundation

to construct a 24,220 sq. ft. covered outdoor ice rink and indoor activity center. Operations and Parks provided the labor to construct and finish the food concession, lobby, and restroom areas in the building, as well as water and sewer service and final landscaping. This project was a major undertaking in the fall and was completed just in time for Christmas Day opening.

## Lake McConaughy Visitor Center

During October and November, 88,000 cu. yds. of earth were hauled and compacted to complete the site work for the new Lake McConaughy Visitor Center. Construction of the Visitor Center is scheduled to begin in the summer of 1999.



*Dredging operations by O & C removed 50,000 cu. yds. of silt from Lakes 4 and 5 at Two Rivers SRA.*



*Moving day at Eugene T. Mahoney State Park saw Operations relocating the Bur Oak picnic shelter.*



## OPERATIONS & CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 1998

Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium	Repaired tile floor at entrance to classroom.
Alliance – District I	Re-sided the metal shop building and other minor repairs to windows and doors.
Arbor Lodge SHP	Contracted for the construction of a gazebo in the northeast part of the park; funds for this project was donated by the family of Bill Benedict. Installed exterior light fixtures and electrical outlets.
Ash Hollow SHP	Repaired flood damaged areas, south of the entrance low-water crossing.
Branched Oak SRA	Assembled and set in place 830 concrete A-jacks 4-feet below conservation pool for shore line erosion control and improved fish habitat. Completed construction of roads, camping pads and trailer dump station at Area One. Removed building foundations from the lake bottom south of Liebers Point and placed riprap along the shore line of Bobber Bay.
Brownville SRA	Removed sediment from boat ramp.
Buffalo Bill Ranch SHP	Constructed a mile of interior road with 4 parking lots and 25 camping pads surfaced with mud rock and gravel.
Calamus SRA	Placed riprap along shore line at Gracie Creek and Little York areas.
Cedar Canyon WMA	Constructed road and parking lot and surfaced with gravel.
Central Office	Remodeled reception area, removed fountain from foyer, replaced floor tile and constructed donor recognition board.
State Fairgrounds	Accomplished the usual painting and repair of buildings for the 1998 State Fair. Installed communication cable to place several computers on line to provide information on our electronic sales system. Provided for night security
Fisheries-District V	Constructed wall and installed door to establish a new office.
Fort Robinson SP	Replaced porches on cabins 42-47, relocated and restored two garages, restored mare barn office dispensary, repaired loading platforms, repaired rodeo arena announcers' box, painted building interiors, replaced sidewalks, and built tool shed.
Fremont SRA	Repaired roads, constructed three picnic shelters, repaired entrance booth and constructed two coin change kiosks.
Gifford Point	Constructed 2,500 feet of interior road and surfaced with crushed rock.
Grove Lake Trout Station	Set a 45-foot pre-engineered steel span bridge on existing concrete abutments.
Indian Cave SP	Built the National Park Service Lewis & Clark Historic Trail interpretive/observation deck. Removed sediment from boat ramp and moved and replaced riprap to improve the ramp.
Information & Education	Constructed back-lit display panels and built two work tables for the mail room.
Lake McConaughy SRA	Moved 88,000 cu. yd. of material to complete entrance road, parking lot, and site for new visitor center.
Louisville SRA	Installed underground electric service and 44 electric pedestals electric hookups at camping sites.
Mahoney T. Mahoney SP	Relocated horse trails; constructed two treetop cabins; installed underground utilities for new cabin loop; repaired swimming pool slide; assisted with construction of activity center ice rink; built fish quiz kiosk; trenched, placed and backfilled underground telephone cable from entrance to Kiewit Lodge; relocated Bur Oak picnic shelter and restroom building; built new theater sets.
Medicine Creek SRA	Removed trees and fences for road improvements.
Niobrara SP	Built roads and parking lots and cabin site work for construction by contract of four new cabins. Completed cabinet work for office expansion.
Osage WMA	Constructed and set in place an exhibit Kiosk.
Platte River SP	Installed new heating and air conditioning in Evergreen, Chokecherry 1 & 2, Cottonwood, Meadowlark, Golden Eagle and Blue Heron cabins. Renovated Mallet Lodge kitchen and installed three pressure pumps to improve the water distribution system.
Ponca SP	Installed pump, filters, and pipe for swimming pool
Rock Creek Hatchery	Installed drain line in effluent pond.
Sac-Wilcox WMA	Installed overhead screening for pheasant pens, repaired water supply to brood house, and repaired brood house restrooms.
Two Rivers SRA	Dredged 45,000 cu. yds. from Lake #4 and 5,000 cu. yds. from Lake #5.



# OUTDOOR EDUCATION

## PROJECT WILD

With the landmark number of teachers certified in Project WILD at 10,000+, 1998 saw teacher certification move toward the 11,000 mark. With every college and university in the state now offering Project WILD, our audience is now almost 60% pre-service teachers.

One of six states in the country chosen, Project WILD in Nebraska was awarded a \$5,000 grant for promotion of wildlife education in urban areas. We partnered with the Folsom Children's Zoo in Lincoln, and high school students at the Zoo School (a newly established high school for Lincoln students) served as wildlife mentors for fifth graders at an inner city school. Successful completion of exchange sessions between students was featured on local TV, as well as the North American Environmental Education Conference through video clips.

Trail Tales, the agency's wildlife and conservation publication for fourth graders, received even greater usage. Positive comments came from many teachers with the continued availability of the teacher guide sheets and correlated P.W. activities. The National Wild Turkey Federation signed on as a sponsoring partner for the Spring 1999 edition, and we anticipate more sponsorships for Trail Tales.

With the arrival of Project WET at the University of Nebraska, all three of the major environmental education programs are now represented in Nebraska. As a beginning to this new partnership, the Project WILD newsletter will be combined with Project Learning Tree and Project WET.

## YOUTH HUNTS

Pheasants Forever co-sponsored 12 youth pheasant hunts with the agency. These involved 180 youth, ages 12-15, across the state in a hands-on application of the principles taught in the

Firearm Hunter Education course.

Youngsters learned about upland game habitat and identification, shot blue rock, watched hunting dog demonstrations, reviewed firearm safety in the field practice before going afield for mentored hunts. Proper field care of game ended each day's activities.

Two archery deer hunts in the Omaha metro area matched 14 Bow Hunter Education instructors with 28 young people ages 12-17. Assisted by instructor-mentors, the youth took 34 deer, using the practice, preparation, and the other concepts and principles taught in Bow Hunter Education.

## OUTDOORS-WOMAN WORKSHOP DRAWS WELL

The seventh annual Becoming An Outdoors-Woman Workshop drew 110 women from Nebraska and Iowa to the State 4-H Camp near Halsey. The workshop is an opportunity for adult women to learn the various skills necessary to participate in outdoors activities, such as hunting, fishing, camping and canoeing.

## CONSERVATION EDUCATION CONFERENCE

In February of even numbered years the Outdoor Education Division sponsors a Conservation Education Conference for volunteers who assist us with the Youth Fishing, Hunter Education, Project WILD and Boater Education programs.

Some 230 volunteers attended the 1998 conference at Grand Island. Approximately 25 staff helped make it a success by serving as instructors and resource people. Volunteers expressed appreciation for the workshop, noting it is something they look forward to.

## AK-SAR-BEN AQUARIUM OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER

The "Big Blue Catfish" is still alive and the central attraction for visitors.

A good percentage of visitors ask if we still have this fish. Reports indicate that television clips of the big fish are still shown, giving national recognition.

Some 1,400 students attended "Water Works," an event for fifth grade students from Douglas and Sarpy counties. Some 100 volunteers assisted with the day-long instruction about the wise use of our water resources.

The aquarium was the field trip destination for 364 groups, accounting for 14,217 individuals. Most of these visitors were school groups.

The Youth Fishing Program sponsored 181 statewide clinics that attracted 11,478 anglers who wanted to learn more about fishing. The aquatic education program also organized kids fishing events for the statewide free fishing day.

The aquatic education program lent 290 videos and water test kits to 60 school teachers for classroom use statewide.

Various adult workshops were held at the center. The most popular is an antler-scoring workshop, where hunters bring in their trophies to see if they qualify for any awards.

The aquarium has worked with Alegent Health Care to provide activities for their cancer survivors. One was an indoor event, and during the summer we held an outdoor picnic.

The Cornhusker Fly Fishers and the Schramm Park Photography Club continue to meet here monthly. Ruth Green continued to volunteer and conduct bird banding workshops monthly from September through April.

In addition to their regular duties, aquarium personnel also

- Served on a committee to set up the HIP registration;
- Sold 3,931 deer, 362 turkey and 9 archery antelope permits;
- Total sales exceeded \$182,500
- Operated a deer check station for 116 days;



- Checked more than 900 deer;
- Answered lake management questions from the public;
- Weighed state record and Master Angler fish;
- Issued deer salvage tags as needed.

## HUNTER EDUCATION

Hunter Education instructors certified 7,881 students during 1998 – 7,075 in firearm classes and 806 in bow classes. There were 203 new instructors certified across the state – 147 firearm and 56 bow.

The Master Instructor, proven successful in the Bow Hunter Education program, has been expanded to the Firearm program. Five Master Instructors have been appointed so far. The goal is to have 25 certified Master Instructors across the state for the Firearm program.

The search for alternative delivery systems for the firearm program is still under way. Evaluations are being performed by selected instructors throughout the state and by the International Hunter Education Association. Both CD-ROM and home study courses are presently being evaluated.

The DART system is extremely popular and in demand throughout the state for hunter education programs, youth hunts, conservation organization activities, and the State Fair. With demand so high, Hunter Education, in concert with the Wildcat Hills Nature Center, is currently soliciting donations toward the purchase of another mobile DART. This purchase should take place during 1999.

Range activity has involved assisting with establishing a shooting complex at the Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant near Grand Island. The City of Grand Island is spearheading this effort.

Archery range development, too, has been an active issue, with plans for archery ranges at Lake McConaughy, Fort Robinson, Wildcat Hills, and an NRD area near Pender. These ranges will be included in the federal aid seg-

HUNTER EDUCATION CLASSES				
FIREARM				
Category	1995	1996	1997	1998
Total Graduates	6,048	6,850	7,216	7,075
Number of Classes	345	377	372	373
Ave. Students per Class	17.53	18.17	19.29	19
Average Hours per Class	11.92	11.98	11.99	12.1
Total Volunteer Hours	11,368	11,963	13,221	12,417
Instructors Certified	119	121	150	147
ARCHERY				
Archery Graduates	997	1,021	951	806
Number of Classes	105	95	95	86
Ave. Students per Class	9.22	10.39	10.16	9.37
Average Hours per Class	10.29	10.85	11.36	11.22
Total Volunteer Hours	3,827	3,870	3,648	3,661
Instructors Certified	48	51	46	56

ment, and most ranges are expected to be completed by the end of the year.

## BOATER EDUCATION

The boating program encompasses a wide range of duties and responsibilities. Three major areas of responsibilities include:

- Administration – Boat registration data entry and monitoring, new legislation for boating safety, and overseeing of the program budget.
- Boating Safety Education – Recruiting and certifying instructors, distributing educational materials, certification of students, and certification of education classes.
- Boating Law Enforcement – Patrols, accident investigation, and safety examinations.

## BOAT REGISTRATIONS

Boat registrations increased from 57,286 in 1989 to 72,649 in 1998, with a steady increase each year. Personal Watercraft (PWC) registrations have grown from 748 in 1989 to 7,235 in 1998. Nationally PWC registrations in 1998 averaged 10% of all boat registrations – a trend Nebraska mirrors. The state ranks 38th nationally in total boat registrations.

## LEGISLATION

The past several years, the Commission has supported legislation introduced in the Legislature that would mandate boating safety education and increase law enforcement on the waters of the state. Some legislative changes have been made in the Boat Act but proposals for mandatory education has died in committee.

## BOATING EDUCATION

The Boating Education program certified 315 students – 202 attended a minimum of 6 hours formal class with a proctored exam, while 113 students successfully completed the home-study course. This represents a gradual decline in interest in boater education. Boating safety is now voluntary.

There are 686 volunteer boating safety instructors in the state, however, only about a dozen are active. Most come from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, the U.S. Power Squadron, and public school teachers.

Nebraska boating safety students include a high percentage of females, but, accident reports indicate most boat operators are overwhelmingly male.

In 1998 the boater safety program featured "Burt the Boat," an educa-

tional aid funded through the boating safety program. "Burt" has been a guest at various schools helping spread the safety message, and he will be busier in the future.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

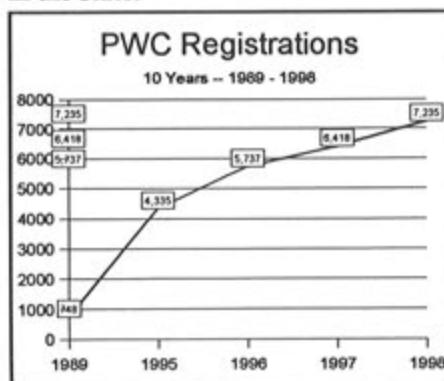
Commission conservation officers perform approximately 99% of the boating law enforcement in the state, and the Boating Law Administrator stepped up boating law enforcement in 1998 by initiating extra patrols on selected problem waters.

Assistance was also provided with boat accident investigations. Law Enforcement has employed a new officer, who will be dedicated to boating law enforcement in season.

The U.S. Coast Guard and the American Red Cross estimate that only 10-15% of the non-fatal accidents are reported, due to ignorance of the reporting law or difficulty in enforcing the law. The reporting of minor property damage accidents is especially low. However, we believe all fatal and most serious injury accidents in Nebraska are reported.

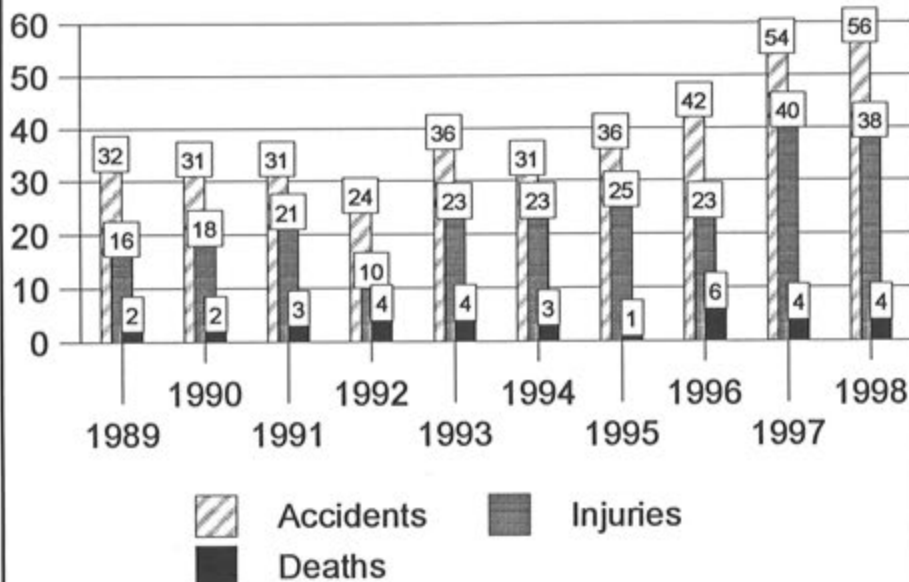
Accidents remained consistent with 1997. There were 56 accidents, involving 84 boats, caused 38 personal injuries requiring medical assistance and four fatalities. All four fatalities involved open motorboats.

At least one personal watercraft was involved in 37 of the 56 accidents – equaling 66%. This figure is down from 75% in 1997. Ten accidents were reported at Fremont SRA, the most from any one location. The upward trend in boating accidents is continuing in the state.



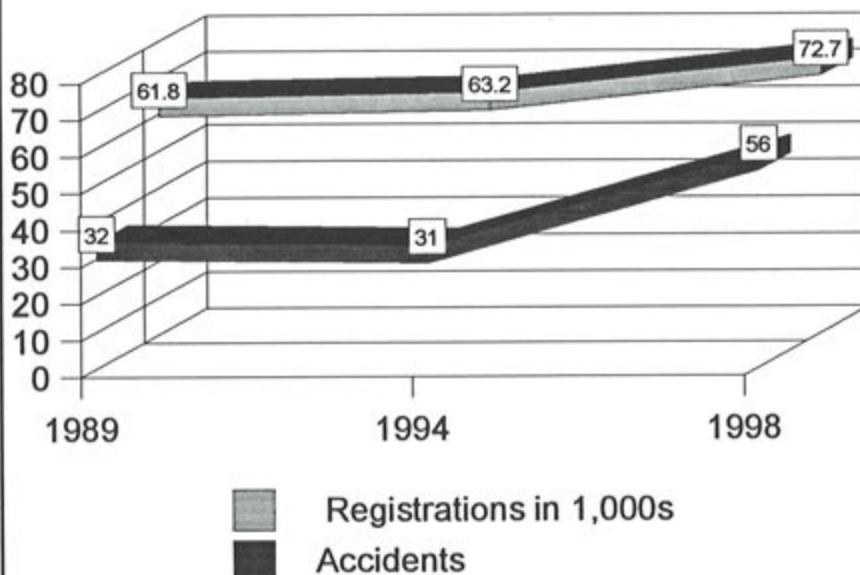
# BOATING ACCIDENTS

10 YEARS -- 1989-1998



## Accidents vs Registrations

5-Year Intervals -- 1989-1998





# STATE PARKS

This division is responsible for administration and operation of Nebraska's system of state park areas. These responsibilities relate to visitor contacts, day-to-day park housekeeping chores, planning and programming improvements, and providing the necessary resource protection and enhancement measures to assure quality outdoor recreation experiences for park users now and into the future.

The 86 state park areas located across Nebraska fall into four categories and offer a variety of outdoor recreation, with opportunities varying from area to area. Some areas have modern campgrounds, cabins, swimming pools and trail rides, while at others visitors may enjoy the cultural interpretation of a historic site or structure. Still other opportunities include boating and fishing at Nebraska's many lakes, primitive camping in the Pine Ridge country and backpacking along the Missouri River.

**STATE PARKS** are public use areas of statewide significance with scenic, scientific and/or historical values and large enough to allow adequate development without infringing upon the primary values.

**RECREATION AREAS** possess resource values primarily associated with active outdoor recreation pursuits, day-use activities and camping. All the state's major water-oriented areas come under this classification.

**HISTORICAL PARKS** are sites of notable historical significance to the State of Nebraska.

**RECREATION TRAILS** are linear corridors of statewide or regional significance, valuable for non-motorized recreational use. They may be equipped with appropriate amenities and support facilities.

Park personnel assist with maintenance on 21 wildlife management areas, walleye egg harvesting, deer check

Park Areas By Class & Area				
Areas	No. of	Water or	Land	Total
State Parks	8	101	29,994	30,095
Rec. Areas	66	66,863	33,769	100,562
Historical Parks	11	0	2,387	2,387
Recreation Trails	1	0	4,121	4,121
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>66,964</b>	<b>70,201</b>	<b>137,165</b>

stations, tours, sports shows and law enforcement.

## PARK PLANNING

Park planning attempts to solve particular park design problems through preparation of graphic designs, descriptive narratives and preliminary cost estimates for various park developments.

Digital maps usable as handouts, web maps and planning documents were completed for nine areas including four Salt Valley lakes and two of the Southwest Reservoirs. Production of these maps is made possible by aerial photos created from the Digital Ortho Photo Quads provided online by the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission. The NRC should complete full state coverage this year.

Planning work was done for Branched Oak, Lewis & Clark and Fort Kearny state recreation areas and Fort Robinson and Ponca state parks.

## SIGN SHOP

Silk-screening was used for regulatory and directional signs on the Cowboy Trail; Joint Venture signs for the Commission and Central Public Power; canoe campsites, Lake McConaughy SRA, parks bulk sign order, and for employee and pool passes; Routed signs were completed for the Johnson Lake SRA campground dedicated to Brownie Wamsley; Ponca State Park, Merritt Reservoir SRA, and for Mahoney park's Quail Ridge cabins,

activity center, picnic areas, and butterfly garden. Decals and lettering were applied to Law Enforcement's patrol boats. Aquatic Habitat signs were constructed for Fisheries. Signs were constructed for Smith Falls. Parade ground signs, banners and celebration signs were made for Fort Kearny SHP's anniversary and for the State Fair. Buildings and lettering in the Old Town at the fairgrounds were touched up. A new entrance sign and campground signs were made for Fremont SRA. Various signs were constructed for Hunter Education, and a tabletop display was built for Outdoor Education projects.

## SNOWMOBILE TRAIL CASH FUND

In 1981, the agency established a Snowmobile Land Leasing program, using the Nebraska Snowmobile Trail Cash Fund to provide lands for public snowmobiling to supplement established trails on state recreation areas. The land-leasing program is administered in cooperation with the Nebraska State Snowmobile Association (NSSA). Affiliated clubs initiate contact with landowners for proposed land sites, and application for lease sites are then reviewed by the Snowmobile Advisory Board. The board presents its recommendations to the Commission for those applications.

Private lands are leased from December 1 through April 30, and the current rates were established at a maximum of \$2 per acre or \$100 per corridor mile of trail 100 feet in width. For the 1998-99 season, no acres of private land were leased.

## HORTICULTURE & LANDSCAPE PROGRAM

The mission of the Horticulture and Landscape Program is "To promote the planting and proper care of trees, shrubs and wildflowers in landscapes of Nebraska State Park System."



Staff made much progress with tree-trimming and related arboriculture work at Mahoney SP, Platte River SP, Fort Kearny SHP, Fort Atkinson SHP, Alexandria SRA, Memphis SRA, Summit Lake SRA, Pelican Point SRA, Pawnee SRA, and Conestoga SRA. Another beautiful flower display was planted and maintained at the Commission's area at the State Fairgrounds. Also at the State Fair is the magnificent "Backyard Habitat Display Garden," designed, planted and maintained by horticulture staff.

Among various landscape projects installed, two of the largest projects were (1) the landscaping of six new "Quail Run" cabins at E. T. Mahoney State Park, including finish grading, turf seeding, installation of erosion control blankets and installation of native trees and shrubs and (2) designing and administering contract installation of landscaping for the Mare Barn Complex at Fort Robinson, where approximately 100 cottonwood shade trees were planted, complete with an automated drip irrigation system.

Many trees and shrubs were again produced in program nurseries and distributed to various park areas. During 1998 Horticulture produced and shipped: 1,500 shade trees, grown in root-control bags; 1,200 landscape grade shrubs, and 1,500 shade tree seedlings, grown in containers. Many of these trees and shrubs went to landscape the new modern campground on the south side of Branched Oak SRA.

## STATE RECREATION TRAILS

State Recreation Trails were created and administration assigned to the Commission by LB 235 in 1993. The nation's longest rail-to-trail conversion as well as Nebraska's first State Recreational Trail was accepted as a donation from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy by conveyance of deed, December 5, 1994, under a law passed by the Nebraska Legislature and the provisions of Federal Railbanking Statutes. Administration of the abandoned Chi-

cago and Northwestern right-of-way was assigned to the Commission's Division of State Parks.

Under Federal Railbanking Statutes, the right-of-way is preserved as a future transportation or utility corridor providing for interim use as a recreational trail. Designated as the Cowboy Trail State Recreation Trail, the right-of-way stretches 321 miles across northern Nebraska from Norfolk to Chadron, and covers 4,121 acres.

## HAPPENINGS & IMPROVEMENTS

- ❖ Construction has started on five cabins at Lewis & Clark SRA; 400 acres of land west of the area was leased for outdoor recreation. Showers were converted to coin-op.
- ❖ 14 primitive campsites were developed at Lake Minatare.
- ❖ A new shower facility is under construction at Merritt Reservoir.
- ❖ A severe storm with wind and hail at Calamus SRA and Hatchery damaged nearly every building.
- ❖ Pibel Lake was drained to deepen a portion of the lake and repair the outlet structure.
- ❖ The Trout Lake and Lake #4 at Two Rivers were dredged by Operations Division.
- ❖ Electrical service was upgraded in campgrounds at Medicine Creek, Swanson, Mormon Island and Ft. Kearny.
- ❖ The 50-year lease for Hord Lake SRA near Central City expired June 30. Efforts to renew the lease were unsuccessful. A short-term extension was granted through Sept. 30, when some improvements were removed and control was returned to private ownership.
- ❖ Two handicap accessible vault latrines were installed at the Lewis & Clark deck and wayside exhibit at Indian Cave.
- ❖ Renovation of the lake and structure were completed at Verdon, and the lake is refilling. Stocking is planned for spring.

- ❖ Arbor Lodge celebrated 75 years as part of the State Park System. The Bill Benedict Memorial located on the newer portion of the park was dedicated in September.
- ❖ Heating and air-conditioning were added to four cabins at Ponca.
- ❖ A new shower building for the inlet campground was opened at Johnson Lake. A dedication ceremony was held naming the main camping area after former superintendent, the late C. L. "Brownie" Wamsley.
- ❖ Restoration of Comanche Hall at Fort Robinson and the two-bedroom cabins included painting interior walls, improvements in bathrooms and new flooring. Restoration of stalls at Barn 106 and the Mare Barn projects continue. Other projects included installation of 25 electrical hookups in the campground, a new showerhouse complex, rebuilding of the crow's nest, and landscaping. Over 600 people attended the Mare Barn dedication in July. Approximately 30,000 trees were planted this year as part of the reforestation program. Other grounds maintenance projects include dirt and gravel work and a rock wall was set in place at the Mare Barn.
- ❖ A fire at the fuel service station in the operations complex for Sherman Reservoir resulted in the destruction of one pickup, some supplies and damage to three buildings.
- ❖ Victoria Springs celebrated 75 years as a state recreation area with a host of activities on Free Fishing and Park Day on May 16. Area businesses donated prizes for the celebration.
- ❖ Dredging was completed at Arnold Lake with some of the spoil used to improve the interior road system.
- ❖ Phase I of the South Shore Campground at Branched Oak was completed and opened for limited use. The outdated solar heating units for area showers were removed, and heating was converted to electrical.



The lake was lowered 5 feet to accommodate installation of A-Jacks as part of a fisheries restoration project. Approximately 200 volunteers and 20 Commission staff participated in a lake shore clean-up project collecting over 7 tons of accumulated trash.

- ❖ Heating and air-conditioning were added to Meadowlark, Blue Heron, Golden Eagle, Chokecherry 1&2, and Cottonwood cabins at Plate River to make them usable year-round. Most of the underground wiring throughout the park was replaced. Underground fuel tanks were removed and replaced with above ground units.
- ❖ Interior hard-surfaced roads at Chadron were milled and resurfaced. Additional graveled roads and parking lots were surfaced.
- ❖ A tornado destroyed the shop, a pickup and a number of trees at Dead Timber and damaged mowers and other equipment.
- ❖ Electrical service was upgraded, and a number of 50 amp pedestals were installed at Louisville. Another 54 pads were electrified. Interior roads, parking lots and the service area were asphalted.
- ❖ Interior roads and parking areas at Schramm Park were asphalted.
- ❖ Fort Kearny celebrated 150 years as a frontier post with a memorial celebration and accompanying activities.
- ❖ Over 12 miles of interior roads and 2 campgrounds were asphalted at Lake McConaughy. Cracks were repaired and a seal coat was installed on roads and campgrounds at Cedar Vue, Otter Creek, Spring Park and Lake Ogallala. An aeration system was installed in the north basin of Lake Ogallala. Site preparation was started for the Lake McConaughy Water Interpretive Center on land donated by Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District. A 3-D archery

range was installed in the Burma Road area.

- ❖ A coin-operated shower facility was constructed in the north area at Fremont. A rededication ceremony was held June 20 with related activities and a water ski show put on by the Sioux Falls Water Ski Club. Asphaltting of interior roads was completed.
- ❖ Access to Long Lake was limited during much of the year due to roads being inundated with high water levels.
- ❖ Operations personnel and local volunteers resumed deepening Champion Lake.
- ❖ Construction was begun on three new cabins at Niobrara SP.
- ❖ Interior roads and campground with electrical hookups and a vault latrine have been completed at Buffalo Bill SRA.
- ❖ The diversion dam on Chadron Creek, which delivers water to Chadron's lagoon, was replaced with a new structure.
- ❖ A new multipurpose activity center was completed at Eugene T. Mahoney SP and features an indoor playground, driving range, shooting range, sports range and outdoor pavilion/skating rink. It opened at Christmas time. Six new cabins opened, and work is under way on four of eight additional units. Roads and parking areas for the cabins, the activity center and Bur Oak picnic shelter were asphalted.

## PERSONNEL

Park's Administration, Horticulture, Landscape and the Sign Shop have a

staff of 16 permanent and 9 seasonal employees. The 86 park areas are maintained by a permanent staff of 126 people. Distribution of these positions is shown in the table.

There are 49 park and recreation areas staffed by resident personnel with a total of 99 permanent field positions. Staff from these areas also maintain 8 satellite areas. Remaining 27 field positions are assigned to other recreation areas and park maintenance crews to maintain the remaining 29 unmanned areas and one recreation trail. Some 800 temporary seasonal employees assisted the permanent parks' staff during the main recreational season.

In addition, several areas used the volunteer services of local groups, military units and Campground Hosts. Green Thumb and AARP members were utilized at several areas. Indian Cave, Two Rivers and Schramm Park utilized a 13-man AmeriCorp crew. Lewis & Clark benefitted from the efforts of an inmate labor crew from a federal minimum security installation.

## VISITATIONS

Accurate counts of park visitors are difficult to achieve. Most areas have multiple accesses and nearly half of the park and recreation areas are unmanned. The 53 reporting areas contribute most of the visitor counts. Thirty-two areas are credited with conservative lump sum visitor estimates. One area was closed to public access for development during this reporting period. The tables on pp. 25-27 show visitation by area and the annual lodging and camping report.

PARK PERSONNEL BY REGION					
REGION	# OF AREAS	MANNED AREAS	OTHER AREAS	PERMANENT EMPLOYEES	TEMPORARY POSITIONS
Northwest Region	20	10	10	18	192
Central Region	46	23	23	41	184
Eastern Region	20	16	4	67	433
Total	86	49	37	126	809



VISITATION	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Arbor Lodge SHP	500	500	1,000	15,000	20,000	21,000	22,000	22,000	30,000	58,000	500	1,500	192,000
Ashfall SHP	555	616	850	1,448	3,101	5,090	5,817	5,209	3,256	1,898	815	546	29,200
Ash Hollow SHP	800	780	1,250	2,000	4,200	7,300	8,400	7,500	1,700	1,400	1,350	1,300	37,980
Bluestem SRA	770	940	1,400	2,236	6,452	9,307	10,286	9,744	8,470	6,140	2,109	878	58,732
Bowring Ranch SHP	0	10	12	47	1,312	4,046	2,013	2,293	1,095	40	130	160	11,158
Box Butte SRA	1,615	1,794	2,474	4,216	9,027	14,816	16,932	15,164	9,478	5,525	2,372	1,590	85,000
Branched Oak SRA	17,350	20,253	31,629	59,550	110,994	119,080	145,337	106,750	63,525	29,827	22,442	14,819	741,556
Bridgeport SRA	875	365	900	3,000	2,590	2,300	7,000	2,780	3,700	1,500	750	600	26,360
Buffalo Bill SHP	0	10	130	641	3,566	6,692	8,427	6,528	3,043	810	400	537	30,784
Calamus SRA	2,975	2,800	2,800	5,250	29,750	37,275	65,835	63,738	37,324	9,100	4,200	2,450	263,497
Chadron SP	3,000	3,100	3,400	11,750	38,350	69,302	87,702	73,819	34,450	10,600	11,050	3,000	349,523
Champion Mill SHP	500	700	400	700	1,500	2,000	1,750	1,100	600	450	300	50	10,050
Conestoga SRA	2,544	2,457	4,500	6,534	16,434	11,865	12,141	8,724	7,590	3,786	2,346	2,445	81,366
Dead Timber SRA	500	500	500	1,000	3,000	3,500	2,500	3,500	3,500	1,200	1,000	1,000	21,700
Enders SRA	1,302	1,372	1,519	1,785	6,563	9,975	9,030	5,100	6,825	1,302	1,400	1,736	47,909
Eugene T. Mahoney SP	50,750	46,113	45,325	71,750	105,350	123,302	145,250	135,625	102,375	99,925	60,375	54,425	1,040,565
Fort Atkinson SHP	317	450	675	1,800	5,950	6,450	7,975	7,550	7,900	7,150	1,850	350	48,417
Fort Hartsuff SHP	200	200	500	750	2,200	6,000	6,250	4,000	4,750	1,200	500	100	26,650
Fort Kearny SHP	160	321	5,200	5,250	8,230	12,555	16,300	12,400	2,880	850	550	0	64,696
Fort Kearny SRA	140	305	1,855	5,925	12,545	26,278	15,450	28,540	13,850	2,200	1,500	22	108,610
Fort Robinson SP	1,500	1,500	1,500	4,531	19,546	118,061	94,700	66,650	19,661	5,178	10,323	877	344,027
Fremont SRA	8,100	12,500	36,100	39,600	110,450	134,100	136,505	110,000	106,325	84,150	21,750	12,200	811,780
Indian Cave SP	1,351	1,780	2,751	13,965	24,913	17,860	19,390	15,862	28,528	31,563	7,640	1,995	167,598
Johnson Lake SRA	498	625	1,016	4,654	34,148	58,413	66,525	35,228	18,006	8,096	1,784	442	229,435
Lake Maloney SRA	800	1,000	3,600	5,250	33,950	73,500	21,000	10,500	5,250	4,200	1,300	300	160,650
Lake McConaughy SRA	8,452	12,432	13,814	25,575	51,286	74,715	158,011	151,838	90,655	10,398	8,404	6,012	611,592
Lake Minatare SRA	455	962	759	1,345	16,680	21,000	27,100	15,100	7,000	0	0	0	90,401
Lewis & Clark SRA	4,788	6,773	10,035	19,016	25,448	25,445	47,771	32,893	20,668	13,650	5,141	4,056	215,684
Louisville SRA	1,050	900	1,440	1,800	24,300	59,400	84,750	98,400	33,180	28,920	1,500	900	336,540
Medicine Creek SRA	1,872	1,173	1,435	3,900	12,775	8,662	16,362	10,150	5,950	3,850	3,500	3,115	72,744
Merritt Reservoir SRA	1,995	1,620	1,708	1,537	18,230	20,600	44,851	17,941	22,550	2,369	3,685	3,100	140,186
Mormon Island SRA	5,000	5,000	5,000	6,000	28,000	64,000	67,500	54,000	50,000	20,000	5,000	5,000	314,500
Niobrara SP	1,250	1,500	2,010	13,661	16,296	25,375	28,875	25,462	21,127	12,688	14,096	3,368	165,708
Olive Creek SRA	426	531	754	1,262	3,414	3,120	3,380	1,081	814	524	367	131	15,804
Oliver Reservoir SRA	900	275	875	2,700	2,630	2,250	8,850	2,270	3,180	1,350	500	475	26,255
Pawnee SRA	6,456	5,676	5,178	26,382	67,731	82,590	70,176	40,215	15,657	11,118	4,794	5,508	341,481
Platte River SP	3,720	4,122	8,370	10,185	24,735	65,325	80,025	65,233	31,767	29,564	11,155	11,616	345,817
Ponca SP	500	2,000	3,300	8,650	50,000	58,000	57,000	45,000	18,000	14,000	2,500	1,500	260,450
Red Willow SRA	157	189	525	1,890	12,250	9,800	7,416	4,200	5,920	1,610	875	176	45,008
Rock Creek Station SHP	455	525	1,715	4,200	7,000	7,350	7,700	7,252	6,370	4,550	2,800	700	50,617
Schramm Park SRA	1,615	1,794	2,474	4,216	9,027	14,816	16,932	15,164	9,478	5,525	2,372	1,590	85,000
Sherman SRA	875	875	1,400	4,900	8,750	12,250	19,250	8,750	5,250	3,850	1,400	2,100	69,650
Smith Falls SP	50	20	75	475	4,266	14,932	27,253	26,980	6,543	900	370	90	81,954
Stagecoach SRA	487	512	734	978	2,679	4,216	4,598	4,881	4,775	2,908	1,432	972	29,172
Summit SRA	1,500	1,000	1,000	1,500	20,000	22,000	15,000	15,000	12,000	1,500	1,000	1,000	92,500
Sutherland SRA	1,200	600	2,400	2,100	18,000	24,500	3,500	1,575	1,225	1,800	1,800	2,000	60,700
Swanson SRA	875	1,750	1,225	1,750	6,500	9,000	9,500	8,900	7,500	1,750	1,000	600	50,350
Two Rivers SRA	3,080	7,400	13,020	20,466	21,308	28,422	41,864	39,866	29,424	10,800	11,400	10,000	237,050
Victoria Springs SRA	50	75	100	300	1,600	9,000	11,000	7,000	2,000	250	300	50	31,725
Wagon Train SRA	547	630	742	914	1,289	1,476	1,621	1,783	1,822	1,243	823	687	13,577
Wildcat Hills SRA	2,000	610	1,000	4,300	2,300	1,750	4,700	1,925	2,970	1,290	300	275	23,420
Willow Creek SRA	4,550	5,600	7,000	9,800	29,750	33,250	35,000	28,000	24,500	8,400	6,300	3,850	196,000
Windmill SRA	800	800	900	800	6,250	8,250	9,500	8,000	6,500	1,500	1,200	800	45,300
33 Unmanned Areas	6,270	6,963	9,603	16,368	35,046	57,519	65,736	58,872	36,795	21,450	9,207	6,171	330,000
Monthly Total	158,477	173,297	249,876	465,602	1,141,661	1,669,079	1,909,736	1,558,035	1,007,700	593,847	261,956	179,163	9,368,428



Fee Campgrounds	Registrations	Participants	Camping Days	Ave. Part. Registration	Ave. Days Participant
Alexandria SRA	1,479	2,113	5,974	1.43	2.83
Arnold SRA	223	529	1,363	2.37	2.58
Atkinson SRA	215	587	1,337	2.73	2.28
Bluestem SRA	1,782	4,455	8,910	2.50	2.00
Branched Oak SRA	10,280	35,212	103,888	3.43	2.95
Bridgeport SRA	1,316	2,559	12,630	1.94	4.94
Calamus SRA	2,390	7,658	18,442	3.20	2.41
Chadron SP	3,420	8,855	22,380	2.59	2.53
Champion Lake SRA	19	72	152	3.79	2.11
Cheyenne SRA	172	479	968	2.78	2.02
Conestoga SRA	1,026	2,917	8,767	2.84	3.01
Cottonwood Lake SRA	155	352	1,535	2.27	4.36
Crystal Lake SRA	351	1,006	2,502	2.87	2.49
Dead Timber SRA	363	1,149	2,650	3.17	2.31
E. T. Mahoney SP	7,809	26,158	85,640	3.35	3.27
Enders SRA	1,853	5,944	18,110	3.21	3.05
Fort Kearny SRA	5,186	13,990	33,096	2.70	2.37
Fort Robinson SP	3,416	8,871	22,899	2.60	2.58
Fremont SRA	6,976	23,937	65,776	3.43	2.75
Gallagher Canyon SRA	565	1,570	5,459	2.78	3.48
Hord Lake SRA	215	467	1,014	2.17	2.17
Indian Cave SP	6,271	16,696	42,576	2.66	2.55
Johnson Lake SRA	6,459	14,961	52,921	2.32	3.54
Keller Park SRA	670	1,857	4,693	2.77	2.53
Lake Mac (prim)	15,500	49,248	153,512	3.18	3.12
Lake Mac SRA	3,293	11,692	33,282	3.55	2.85
Lake Maloney SRA	2,621	5,290	13,201	2.02	2.50
Lake Minatare SRA	3,628	6,888	16,323	1.90	2.37
Lake Ogallala SRA	3,263	9,492	23,547	2.91	2.48
Lewis & Clark SRA	4,149	13,932	38,255	3.36	2.75
Long Pine SRA	360	1,293	3,111	3.59	2.41
Louisville SRA	8,688	25,439	51,228	2.93	2.01
Medicine Creek SRA	2,321	10,733	26,701	4.62	2.49
Memphis SRA	831	2,077	4,155	2.50	2.00
Merritt SRA	5,116	11,820	33,110	2.31	2.80
Mormon Island SRA	3,349	9,150	18,867	2.73	2.06
Niobrara SP	1,621	4,867	12,122	3.00	2.49
Olive Creek SRA	193	483	966	2.50	2.00
Oliver Reservoir SRA	1,999	3,484	9,593	1.74	2.75
Pawnee SRA	5,028	14,868	39,342	2.96	2.65
Pelican Point SRA	61	150	321	2.46	2.14
Pibel Lake SRA	39	131	263	3.36	2.01
Ponca SP	2,154	7,007	19,573	3.25	2.79
Red Willow SRA	1,396	6,189	15,380	4.43	2.49
Rock Creek Lake SRA	260	649	1,687	2.50	2.60
Rock Creek Station SHP	1,518	2,573	6,521	1.70	2.53
Sherman SRA	1,506	1,890	5,518	1.26	2.92
Smith Falls SP	1,069	7,630	21,073	7.14	2.76
Stagecoach SRA	281	703	1,406	2.50	2.00
Summit SRA	1,135	4,219	9,595	3.72	2.27
Sutherland SRA	622	1,487	3,595	2.39	2.42
Swanson SRA	1,544	4,082	10,185	2.64	2.50
Two Rivers SRA	5,160	15,888	38,691	3.08	2.44
Union Pacific SRA	49	89	196	1.82	2.20
Victoria Sprints SRA	830	2,267	5,786	2.73	2.55
Wagon Train SRA	268	670	1,340	2.50	2.00
War Axe SRA	48	105	222	2.19	2.11
Wildcat Hills SRA	90	226	1,276	2.51	5.65
Willow Creek SRA	1,921	7,835	19,603	4.08	2.50
Windmill SRA	2,479	5,946	13,735	2.40	2.31
TOTAL	147,001	432,886	1,176,963	2.94	2.72

## INCOME

Camping, lodging, swimming and trail rides are typical activities for which fees are charged. Other park income is derived from restaurant and concession sales, leases for cabin sites, conservation practices, shelter rentals and private concession leases.

Monies generated from these sources are returned to the Park Cash Fund to help support park programs. Park areas also vend hunting and fishing permits, habitat stamps, trout stamps, publications and other items purchased for resale. Income from these activities are deposited to their respective funds. Certain goods, services and facilities are subject to applicable sales tax, state lodging tax and county lodging tax. Park cash income is also received through Lincoln, Omaha and District offices, Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium and private permit agents.

Park Cash income from all sources totaled \$13,231,737 less liability accounts and adjustments of \$287,241 for a total of \$13,518,978. The listing below shows the income producing categories and the following pages show area income generated by activity and the total dollars generated for all activities at that area.

- ✓ **Resale** -- Souvenirs, fish food, buffalo, advertising, park publications, grocery store, snacks, gas and oil
- ✓ **Food** -- Restaurants, cookouts
- ✓ **Catering** -- Catering for various functions
- ✓ **Camping** -- Campground sites,, camping coupons, electric hookups
- ✓ **Lodging** -- Lodge, cabins, group facilities, employee rent, advanced deposits, refunds, stall rental, teepees, picnic shelters
- ✓ **Marina Lease** -- Wet slips, docks, buoys
- ✓ **Concessions** -- Private concession agreements at 2% of gross sales
- ✓ **Boats & Recreational Equipment** -- Paddle boats, golf, archery, hayrack, buggy, Conestoga, stagecoach, bicycles
- ✓ **Swimming Pools** -- admissions, annual passes



CABINS	Registrations	Participants	Cabin Days	Ave. Part. Per Regls.	Ave. Days Per Part.
Chadron SP	809	2,764	9,683	3.42	3.50
E T Mahoney (Cabins)	4,576	27,546	85,416	6.02	3.10
E T Mahoney (Lodge)	5,120	24,460	67,690	4.78	2.77
Fort Rob (Cabins)	1,318	8,910	26,352	6.76	2.96
Fort Rob (Lodge)	1,353	4,008	7,612	2.96	1.90
Niobrara SP	1,063	4,611	15,152	4.34	3.29
Platte River SP	3,158	16,641	51,468	5.27	3.09
Ponca SP	622	2,559	8,445	4.11	3.30
Two Rivers SRA	335	1,394	4,213	4.16	3.02
Victoria Springs SRA	70	268	798	3.83	2.98
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>18,424</b>	<b>93,161</b>	<b>276,829</b>	<b>5.06</b>	<b>2.97</b>

- ✓ **Trail Rides** -- Horseback trail rides
- ✓ **Land Lease** -- Private cabins, club sites, crop and pasture, right-of-way, ice fishing shelters, lease to other agencies and other land leases
- ✓ **Vending** -- Vending machines, pay phones, pay showers, Laundromat
- ✓ **Admissions** -- Arbor Lodge, Kountze Theater, museums, entertainment
- ✓ **Fees & Adjustments** -- Cash gifts, liquidated damages, refunds, surplus, federal and state reimbursements
- ✓ **Miscellaneous** -- Collection fees, tips, personal phone, Linens, towels, bedding, tablecloths
- ✓ **Park Permits** -- All annual, duplicate and daily permits
- ✓ **Game Fund** -- All game permits, stamps, trout tags, game resale, *NEBRASKA* land magazine
- ✓ **Habitat Fund** -- Habitat stamps, habitat resale, habitat patch
- ✓ **Aquatic Fund** -- Aquatic Habitat stamps, federal reimbursements, gifts, interest
- ✓ **Other Funds** -- Includes income and refunds for Cowboy Trail, Snowmobile, NORDA, Trail Development Assistance Fund, Recreational Trail Fund, Non-Game and Endangered Species and federal grants.

## OPERATIONS/MAINTENANCE

State parks, recreation areas and recreation trails are administered under three separate programs. Program 549 provides funding for administration, operation and maintenance of Parks, Historical Parks, Recreation areas offering improved facilities and resident management and maintenance personnel. Program 550 provides funding for Recreational Trails. Program 617-09 funds park crews to maintain the system's lesser developed, unmanaged areas and the Operations Division which plays a supporting role to all park crews when maintenance and construction projects exceed the capabilities of park crews. Operations Division also receives funding through the Game Fund.

1998-99 Budget Authority	Program 549	Program 550	Program 617
General Fund Appropriation	\$ 4,595,657	\$ 391,944	\$ 1,851,757
Cash Fund Appropriation	8,781,256		1,884,354
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 13,376,913</b>	<b>\$ 391,944</b>	<b>\$ 3,736,111</b>

1997-98 Budget Authority	Program 549	Program 550	Program 617
General Fund Appropriation	\$ 4,533,288	\$ 394,120	\$ 1,782,757
Cash Fund Appropriation	8,498,256		2,141,777
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,033,504</b>	<b>\$ 394,120</b>	<b>\$ 3,924,534</b>

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

New capital construction authority by program for FY 98/99 for 549 and 617 includes:

Prog	Area	Park Cash	NORDA
900	Park Areas - General	160,000	100,000
901	Deferred Maintenance		150,000
902	Trail Development		
967	Fort Robinson SP		100,000
967	Niobrara SP		400,000
967	Platte River SP	30,000	
967	Smith Falls SP	65,000	
968	Arbor Lodge SHP	10,000	
968	Fort Kearny SHP		70,000
969	Branched Oak SRA		350,000
969	Calamus SRA	40,000	
969	Enders SRA	65,000	
969	Lewis & Clark SRA		200,000
969	Long Pine SRA	27,500	
969	Medicine Creek SRA	40,000	
969	Merritt SRA	35,000	
969	Sutherland SRA	20,000	
969	Walgren SRA	25,000	
972	Administration Facilities	25,000	
975	Emergency Facility Repair		60,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$42,500</b>	<b>\$ 430,000</b>

## 309 PROJECTS

In addition to capital projects, many park structure renovations are accomplished through the Building Renewal Program. Areas authorized Renewal Funds (309 Projects) are as follows:

AREA	AUTHORITY
Buffalo Bill SRA	15,000
Calamus SRA	9,000
Chadron SP	15,700
Fort Atkinson SHP	6,000
Fort Robinson SP	72,000
Lake McConaughy SRA	3,500
Medicine Creek SRA	4,000
Platte River SP	180,667
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$318,367</b>



# FY 1997-98 INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

Area	Expenses	Income From Area	Profit & Loss	Capital
Chadron SP	\$ 273,883	\$ 273,244	(\$ 639.00)	\$ 23,667
Fort Robinson SP	1,335,115	1,293,788	(41,327)	145,044
Indian Cave SP	287,965	224,571	(63,394)	165,256
E. T. Mahoney SP	3,929,011	4,499,712	570,701	656,976
Niobrara SP	381,551	245,126	(136,425)	1,621
Platte River SP	903,602	683,029	(220,573)	96,593
Ponca SP	247,733	189,192	(58,541)	42,902
Smith Falls SP	94,508	79,935	(14,573)	17,448
Arbor Lodge SHP	226,782	98,709	(128,073)	1,820
Ash Fall SHP*	3,481	19,496	16,015	0
Ash Hollow SHP	153,257	12,424	(140,833)	4,560
Bowring SHP	97,034	7,370	(89,664)	0
Buffalo Bill Ranch SHP	214,993	41,404	(173,589)	37,510
Champion Mill SHP	73,313	3,409	(69,904)	12,865
Fort Atkinson SHP	159,562	13,210	(146,352)	0
Fort Hartsuff SHP	137,810	10,001	(127,809)	2,777
Fort Kearny SHP	195,545	131,854	(63,691)	235
Rock Creek Station SHP	193,424	43,715	(149,709)	91,662
Calamus SRA	178,354	89,137	(89,217)	0
Dead Timber SRA	65,959	6,809	(59,150)	0
Enders SRA	112,675	27,190	(85,485)	659
Fremont SRA	356,405	229,627	(126,778)	292,828
Johnson Lake SRA	170,802	98,814	(71,988)	139,350
Lake McConaughy SRA	517,480	296,879	(220,601)	272,319
Lake Minatare SRA	143,347	66,386	(76,961)	782
Lewis & Clark SRA	527,712	452,150	(75,562)	427,705
Louisville SRA	194,248	227,778	33,530	79,555
Medicine Creek SRA	127,907	51,903	(76,004)	10
Mormon Island SRA	107,074	78,725	(28,349)	125
Red Willow SRA	96,813	23,585	(73,228)	5,267
Schramm Park SRA	50,413	0	(50,413)	0
Sherman SRA	180,731	100,377	(80,354)	0
Southwest Reservoirs (Gen.)	13,639	2,073	(11,566)	0
Summit SRA	72,364	9,434	(62,930)	0
Swanson SRA	118,155	27,247	(90,908)	10
Two Rivers SRA	298,660	314,827	16,167	0
Victoria Springs SRA	84,338	34,766	(49,572)	0
Wildcat Hills Nature Center	102,782	15,827	(86,955)	4,839
Willow Creek SRA	86,262	41,623	(44,639)	0
Windmill SRA	116,517	52,528	(63,989)	533
Cowboy Trail	146,811	736,213	589,402	636,809
Total for Areas	\$ 12,778,017	\$ 10,854,089	(\$1,923,928)	\$ 3,161,727

This table summarizes park income and expenses for fiscal year 1997/98. It includes all income deposited by area. Park cash income was also generated through Lincoln office, district offices, Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium, Omaha office, maintenance districts and all permit agents.

**Column 1** -- Only area name listed, includes satellites managed by area, i.e. Indian Cave, Brownville & Verdon;

**Column 2** -- Expenses include salaries, benefits, supplies, equipment, mileage, capital expenses;

**Column 3** -- Income produced on that area(s) from all sources, i.e. lodging, camping, park entry permits, docks, and hunt & fish licenses, etc.;

**Column 4** -- Income less expenditures \*permits reported through agent for calendar year 1996;

**Column 5** -- Includes all Capital expenditures.

## NOTE

This report includes all income deposited by areas. Park cash income was also generated through Lincoln office, District offices, Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium, Maintenance Areas and all permit agents.

1997-98 EXPENDITURES			
Type	Program 549	Program 550	Program 617
Personal Serv. Permanent	\$ 3,284,067	\$ 92,361	\$1,113,152
Personal Serv. Temporary	2,841,784	8,320	632,618
Overtime & Other wages	68,578	0	4,999
Personal Serv. Benefits	1,107,543	19,724	344,206
Operating Exp. & Supplies	4,834,792	37,227	1,037,768
Travel	15,910	2,707	43,294
Equipment	875,080	57,732	304,358
Credit Cards	479	0	0
Total Disbursements	\$13,028,232	\$218,071	\$3,480,296

1998 INCOME SUMMARY	RESALE INCOME	FOOD SERVICE	CATER	CAMPING	LODGING & FACILITIES	MARINA LEASE	PRIVATE CONCESS	SWIMMING POOL	TRAIL RIDES	BOATS/GOLF REC EQUIP	LAND LEASE	VENDING MACHINES
ALEXANDRIA SRA				7,806			682					
ARBOR LODGE SHP	7,311											114
ARNOLD SRA				1,510								
ASH HOLLOW SHP	5,587											
ATKINSON LAKE SRA				1,339								
BLUESTEM SRA				10,370								
BOWMAN LAKE SRA				100								
BOWRING RANCH SHP	3,110											
BOX BUTTE SRA				4,997							10	
BRANCHED OAK SRA				132,591			4,653				480	882
BRIDGEPORT SRA				4,137								
BROWNVILLE SRA				160			400					
BUFFALO BILL SHP	12,921								7,575			76
CALAMUS SRA				60,825								
CHADRON MAINT												
CHADRON SP	10,141			37,936	117,279			14,153	12,787	11,937	1,145	612
CHAMPION MILL SHP	256											
CHAMPION LAKE SRA				79								
CHEYENNE SRA				501								
CONESTOGA SRA				5,988								
COTTONWOOD LAKE SRA				465								
COWBOY TRAIL SRT												
CRYSTAL LAKE SRA				2,301								
DEAD TIMBER SRA				3,333								
ENDERS SRA				15,623							9,700	
EUGENE T. MAHONEY SP	463,451	1,180,084	352,070	201,536	1,658,106		13,091	152,197	99,880	137,366	4	26,795
FORT ATKINSON SHP	2,894											
FORT HARTSLUFF SHP	4,667											
FORT KEARNY SHP	18,895											
FORT KEARNY SRA				63,197	70							
FORT ROBINSON SP	107,657	221,452	32,426	51,503	432,564			15,635	58,740	51,421		59
FREMONT SRA				123,399			2,420					5,820
GALLAGHER CANYON SRA				1,200								
HORD LAKE SRA				690								
INDIAN CAVE SP	7,947			91,533	275		1,088		14,394	5,978		3,111
JOHNSON LAKE SRA				63,887								
KELLER PARK SRA				6,360								
LAKE MALONEY SRA				12,040								
LAKE MCCONAUGHY SRA				200,245			18,875				50	9,634
LAKE MINATARE SRA	466			20,143	75	300					15,055	7
LEWIS & CLARK SRA	90,655			68,077	133	47,278	1,211			650		7,157
LINCOLN MAINT												
LONG PINE SRA				2,304								
LOUISVILLE SRA				124,476			1,340					38
MEDICINE CREEK SRA				25,650		450	2,164				5,620	
MEMPHIS SRA				4,838			496					
MERRITT SRA				21,072			56				3,919	
MORMON ISLAND SRA				42,642								108
NIORARA SP	17,733			21,442	155,512		1,798	9,317	11,884	8,666		1,927
NORTH PLATTE MAINT												
OLIVE CREEK SRA				1,121								
OLIVER RESERVOIR SRA				5,996								
PAWNEE SRA	8			63,828			1,476					
PELICAN POINT SRA				324								
PIBEL LAKE SRA				131								
PLATTE RIVER SP	51,386	88,244	19,157		354,452			25,665	44,004	41,867		18
PONCA SP	9,195	364		38,402	75,380			12,889	21,462	787		
RED WILLOW SRA				13,945		900	2,572				2,800	
RIVERVIEW MARINA SRA				4,987								
ROCK CREEK STATION SHP	2,937			14,323	100		135			880		
ROCKFORD LAKE SRA				2,025								
SHERMAN SRA				6,757			3,588				50,196	742
SMITH FALLS SP	16,385	36		33,874	2,167		78				420	6,556
STAGECOACH SRA				1,634								
SUMMIT SRA				6,604								
SUTHERLAND SRA				1,836								
SW RESERVOIR GEN												
SWANSON SRA				12,705		10	1,608				4,245	
TWO RIVERS SRA	2,016			66,138	30,335		996			1,091		
UNION PACIFIC SRA				282								
VERDON LAKE SRA												
VICTORIA SPRINGS SRA	421			11,577	7,119					3,339		
WAGON TRAIN SRA				1,560								
WALGREN LAKE SRA				933								
WILDCAT HILLS SRA	5,616			282	875		20				1,200	83
WILLOW CREEK SRA				34,925							577	464
WINDMILL SRA				33,208								286
TOTAL PARK INCOME	841,655	1,490,180	403,653	1,793,689	2,834,441	48,938	58,747	229,856	270,726	263,980	95,421	64,488
OMAHA OFFICE	25											
AK-SAR-BEN AQUARIUM	93											
DISTRICT OFFICES												
CENTRAL OFFICE	1,120		10	14			11,653				492	368
TOTALS	842,873	1,490,180	403,663	1,793,703	2,834,441	48,938	70,400	229,856	270,726	263,980	95,913	64,857



1998 INCOME SUMMARY	ADMISS	FEES, TORTS ADJUSTMENTS	MISC	PARK INCOME	PARK PERMITS	GAME FUND	HABITAT FUND	AQUATIC FUND	GRAND TOTAL	OTHER FUNDS	TOTAL
ALEXANDRIA SRA			10	8,498			3,603		12,101		12,101
ARBOR LODGE SHP	56,485	2,025	10	65,945	19,198	543	40	55	85,782		85,782
ARNOLD SRA				1,510					1,510		1,510
ASH HOLLOW SHP			4	5,592	5,378	162	20	25	11,176		11,176
ATKINSON LAKE SRA				1,339					1,339		1,339
BLUESTEM SRA				10,370					10,370		10,370
BOWMAN LAKE SRA				100					100		100
BOWRING RANCH SHP		21		3,132	1,886	751	20	25	5,813	40	5,853
BOX BUTTE SRA				5,007		1,150			6,157		6,157
BRANCHED OAK SRA		41	20	138,667	40,850	27,374	60	705	207,656	1,412	209,068
BRIDGEPORT SRA				4,137					4,137		4,137
BROWNVILLE SRA				560					560		560
BUFFALO BILL SHP		14	11	20,596	19,138	116	20	15	39,885		39,885
CALAMUS SRA		19		60,844	15,904	13,263	231	600	90,843		90,843
CHADRON MAINT										49	49
CHADRON SP		408	265	206,662	32,958	29,993	3,290	760	273,662		273,662
CHAMPION MILL SHP		23		280	1,982	592	90	90	3,034		3,034
CHAMPION LAKE SRA				79					79		79
CHEYENNE SRA				501					501		501
CONESTOGA SRA				5,988		2,287			8,276		8,276
COTTONWOOD LAKE SRA				465					465		465
COWBOY TRAIL SRT										688,355	688,355
CRYSTAL LAKE SRA				2,301					2,301		2,301
DEAD TIMBER SRA		586		3,919	2,023	441	95	90	6,568		6,568
ENDERS SRA			10	25,333	2,683	1,756	980	80	30,833		30,833
EUGENE T. MAHONEY SP	143,775	7,220	66,828	4,502,402	467,817	11,250	1,316	3,020	4,985,805	57	4,985,862
FORT ATKINSON SHP		21		2,915	7,916	830	50	160	11,871		11,871
FORT HARTSUFF SHP				4,667	4,320	1,014	20	25	10,046		10,046
FORT KEARNY SHP		60	408	19,364		277			19,641	260	19,901
FORT KEARNY SRA		2	10	63,279	48,078	670	50	210	112,287		112,287
FORT ROBINSON SP		162,853	2,287	1,136,598	57,941	36,440	4,071	1,310	1,236,359	270	1,236,629
FREMONT SRA		853	39	132,531	119,216	778	170	205	252,900	6	252,906
GALLAGHER CANYON SRA				1,200					1,200		1,200
HORD LAKE SRA				690					690		690
INDIAN CAVE SP	495	849	30	125,699	41,702	969	180	185	168,734	(18,904)	149,831
JOHNSON LAKE SRA		96	1	63,984	24,354	1,326	140	600	90,405		90,405
KELLER PARK SRA			20	6,380		1,052	884		8,316		8,316
LAKE MALONEY SRA				12,040					12,040		12,040
LAKE MCCONAUGHY SRA		54	111	228,969	77,914	14,014	1,340	4,180	326,418	316	326,734
LAKE MINATARE SRA		395	10	36,451	26,022	2,957	20	1,040	66,491		66,491
LEWIS & CLARK SRA		215,041	159	430,360	26,370	3,254	90	1,095	461,169	21	461,190
LINCOLN MAINT										539	539
LONG PINE SRA				2,304					2,304		2,304
LOUISVILLE SRA		231		126,084	70,440	7,434	50	2,695	206,703		206,703
MEDICINE CREEK SRA		37	30	33,951	3,683	15,208	30	35	52,907		52,907
MEMPHIS SRA				5,334					5,334		5,334
MERRITT SRA				25,047	882	38	10	15	25,993		25,993
MORMON ISLAND SRA		36	10	42,795	29,420	906	40	355	73,516		73,516
NIOBRARA SP		894	20	229,192	23,647	4,346	490	635	258,311		258,311
NORTH PLATTE MAINT										24	24
OLIVE CREEK SRA				1,121		1,311			2,432		2,432
OLIVER RESERVOIR SRA		114		6,110					6,110		6,110
PAWNEE SRA		133	44	65,489	36,017	3,706	(20)	80	105,272		105,272
PELICAN POINT SRA				324					324		324
PIBEL LAKE SRA				131					131		131
PLATTE RIVER SP		646	2,704	628,143	61,302	1,390	330	395	691,561		691,561
PONCA SP		438	40	158,956	30,042	2,688	310	580	192,575		192,575
RED WILLOW SRA				20,216	4,143	3,119	60	95	27,633		27,633
RIVERVIEW MARINA SRA				4,987					4,987		4,987
ROCK CREEK STATION SHP		313	10	18,698	8,657	394	60	20	27,829		27,829
ROCKFORD LAKE SRA				2,025					2,025		2,025
SHERMAN SRA		482		61,765	4,230	910	4,741	130	71,776		71,776
SMITH FALLS SP		348	10	59,874	17,994	333		75	78,277		78,277
STAGECOACH SRA		221		1,855		838			2,692		2,692
SUMMIT SRA			20	6,624	684	161	40	30	7,539		7,539
SUTHERLAND SRA				1,836					1,836		1,836
SW RESERVOIR GEN					1,832	425	190	130	2,577		2,577
SWANSON SRA				18,568	1,832	7,094	1,858	235	29,587		29,587
TWO RIVERS SRA		(155)	10	100,430	84,211	90,639	1,080	12,485	288,845		288,845
UNION PACIFIC SRA				282					282		282
VERDON LAKE SRA		350,000		350,000					350,000		350,000
VICTORIA SPRINGS SRA		3	10	22,469	8,024	1,893	461	545	33,392		33,392
WAGON TRAIN SRA				1,560		648			2,207	241	2,448
WALGREN LAKE SRA				933					933		933
WILDCAT HILLS SRA		46	10	8,133	8,090	1,783	640	230	18,875		18,875
WILLOW CREEK SRA		71	30	36,067	1,578	102	30	25	37,802		37,802
WINDMILL SRA			10	33,504	13,390	1,697	350	555	49,497		49,497
TOTAL PARK INCOME	200,756	744,444	73,187	9,414,162	1,453,749	300,326	27,530	33,820	11,229,586	672,685	11,902,271
OMAHA OFFICE		354	10	389	31,022	276,138	26,465	8,040	342,054	27	342,081
AK-SAR-BEN AQUARIUM			10	103	18,447	127,107	9,440	1,710	156,808	9	156,817
DISTRICT OFFICES			28	28	72,961	754,690	46,111	11,876	885,665	57	885,722
CENTRAL OFFICE		652,735	3	666,396	1,574,480	14,523,342	3,996,432	1,185,799	21,946,451	12,437,561	34,384,012
TOTALS	200,756	1,397,533	73,238	10,081,078	3,150,660	15,981,604	4,105,978	1,241,245	34,560,565	13,110,338	47,670,903



# REALTY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

## Environmental Services

Game and Parks Commission staff members evaluated potential impacts of project proposals by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Nebraska Natural Resources Commission, Nebraska Department of Roads, consultants and private individuals.

The "404" Permit Program administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers offers Game and Parks Commission (along with other agencies and individuals) the opportunity to evaluate proposed developments affecting streams and wetlands. Recommendations to reduce or eliminate adverse effects on fish and wildlife habitat are sent to the Corps for their consideration in the permit process.

A review effort continuing from 1997 involved the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing of hydropower and irrigation facilities on the Platte River. These include Kingsley Hydro, Lake McConaughy and the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District (also referred to as Tri-County). In conjunction with the relicensing, considerable time was spent on the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the U.S. Department of the Interior, Wyoming, Colorado, and Nebraska to address the needs of endangered species on the Platte River.

Some time was also spent with the Commission's instream flow applications on the Platte River and the negotiations with the opponents of those applications continued from 1997. Meetings and negotiations on the MOA will continue next year, as well as work related to the Platte River Instream Flow applications.

Nebraska continues to participate in the Missouri River Fish & Wildlife Mitigation Project (with representatives from Iowa, Kansas and Missouri) to address environmental concerns pertaining to the channelized Missouri River from Sioux City to St. Louis. The Corps of Engineers, with assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the four state conservation agencies, evaluated land/water units having potential for improving habitat for fish, migratory waterfowl, furbearers and other wildlife.

Possible sites for restoration are evaluated and ranked within the Commission and consensus recommendations forwarded to the Corps. Chute restorations (flow-through), dike modifications and water-level controls are among the features under consideration for the project. The Corps has acquired 6,431 acres for projects in Nebraska. Hamburg Bend was constructed in 1996 and is providing much-needed chute habitat.

Projects are being planned at Blackbird/Tieville/Upper Decatur Bends, Hole-In-The-Rock, Kansas Bend, Langdon Bend, Middle Decatur Bend, Rush Bottom Bend, Soldier Bend, and Tobacco Island.

Staff has participated in the "Back to the River" project; NGPC is a sponsor and member of the Steering Committee. This project will develop a comprehensive regional plan for the Missouri River Corridor from the mouth of the Platte River, to just north of Blair. The project will facilitate many activities in the corridor including, but not limited to, recreation access, trails, habitat restoration, education, historic preservation and interpretation. This project will continue next year.

Beginning in 1997 and continuing in 1998, staff reviewed preliminary zoning and other proposed development actions from the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County Planning Department. Staff provide comments to the Planning Department for use in evaluating the projects.

Staff participated in the Lower Platte Corridor Alliance, in which NGPC is a member. The Alliance is an umbrella organization of state and local agencies with the mission to foster the development and implementation of locally drawn strategies, actions, and practices to protect and restore the vitality of the river's resources. This program will continue next year.

Several small watershed projects, Natural Resources District proposals in a number of communities across the state, power-line corridor studies, and airport facility developments are among the ongoing activities requiring Game and Parks Commission participation. Technical assistance was also provided to consulting engineering firms during preliminary design stages of wastewater treatment facilities and rural electric cooperatives.

## Geographic Information Systems

The Realty and Environmental Services Division is responsible for providing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) support to other divisions. GIS services and technical support are provided to the Wildlife, Fisheries, Parks, Information and Education, and Administration. The tasks of project coordination, data acquisition, technical support to all divisions, and software and hardware maintenance of the Game and Parks GIS are the responsibility of Realty and Environmental Services.



Realty and Environmental Services represents the agency at various inter-agency groups in which GIS is used to address natural resource issues. These groups include the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture, Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance and the Platte River Cooperative Agreement. The RES division represents the Game and Parks Commission as a voting member of the Nebraska GIS Steering Committee.

GIS is a powerful set of mapping and analysis tools that the Game and Parks Commission is utilizing to create, manage, display and analyze a number of spatial databases. Databases are used to create new maps for whooping crane sighting data, bald eagle roost and nest sites, fish distributions, and element occurrence data as requested.

GIS is used to create maps displaying results of deer surveys and to create new waterfowl hunting maps. GIS support was provided to the snow goose project, CRP-MAP program, and the Missouri River mitigation projects. GIS databases were used by the Fisheries Division to create a database displaying fish consumption advisories. This map was included in a brochure for statewide distribution.

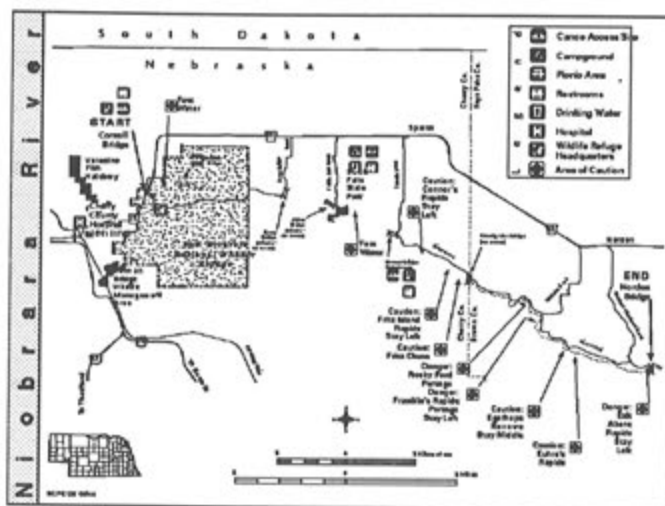
Data support was provided to the Outdoor Education Division at the Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area. As part of a cooperative effort with the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture, a digi-

tal database is being created to catalog historical wetlands data gathered in the 1950s and 60s.

This data is currently stored on the original data sheets and providing it in digital form will allow easier access to the data and greater analytical capabilities. This will be a major accomplishment and have a broad range of uses. The GIS staff is coordinating the completion of the data entry by temporary employees and agency staff.

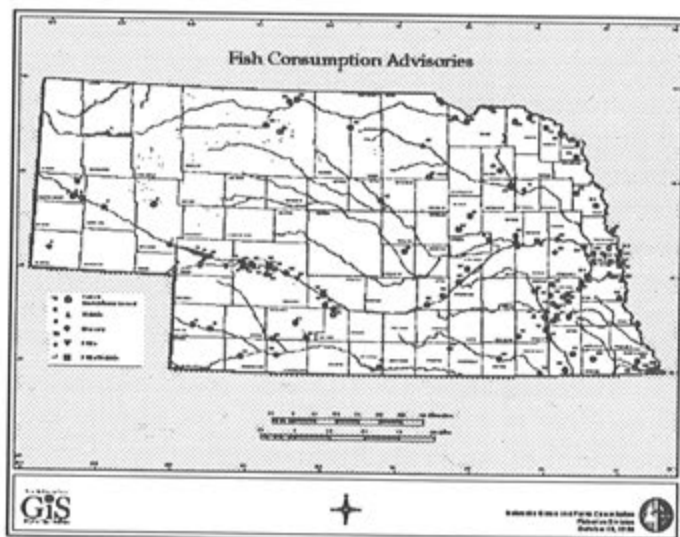
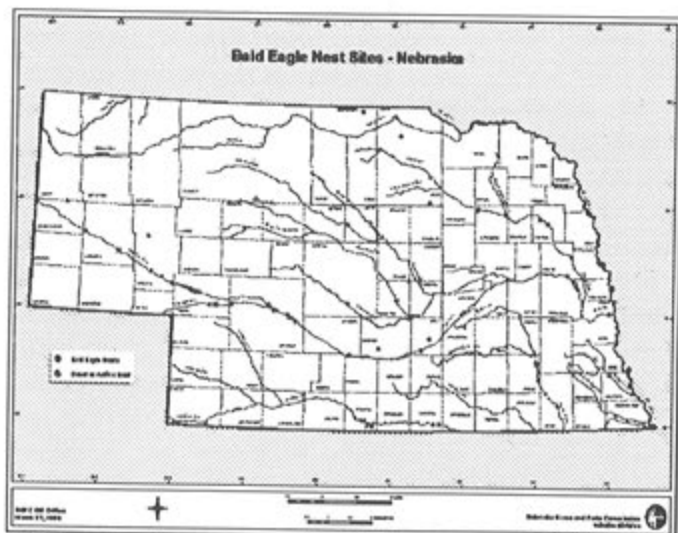
GIS was used to provide aerial photograph support to Parks Division at Lake McConaughy and Branched Oak Lake. Maps for agency use were created for new project construction at Lake McConaughy. Canoe access maps for public use were created for the Parks Division. A Cowboy Trail map was created for use with a NEBRASKAland article.

Within the Realty Division, GIS is being used to maintain property records and enter survey data into digital databases and to record new land acquisitions. The GIS records are linked to a land database maintained by the Realty Division. Maps for Commission hearings are produced from GIS databases,



and a recently completed state map showing Game and Parks properties was created for agency use and public distribution.

GIS will be used to create resource management plans for the Republican River basin as part of an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation. This will involve inventory of existing conditions and analysis. A cooperative project among the Game and Parks Commission, Colorado Division of Wildlife, and Wyoming Game and Fish Department will create a series of maps to display current and historical fish species distribution in the Platte River basin. Data will be gathered to support site planning on Rainwater Basin wetlands. A statewide breeding bird atlas for publication is being generated with GIS technologies from observation databases.



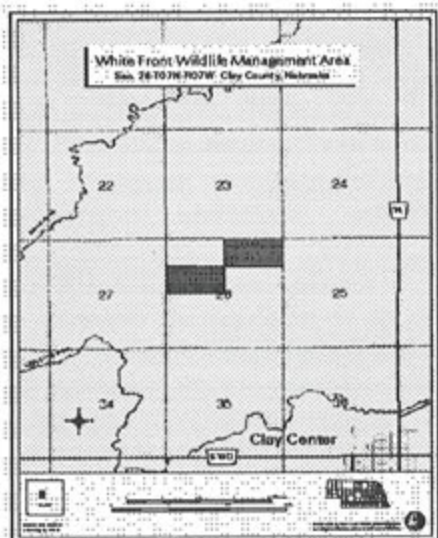
## New Land Purchases

The division was involved in land acquisitions; appraisals; appraisal reviews; lease renewals; lease payments and cancellations; negotiations; and public hearings for the agency this past year.

**Appraisal Reviews:** During 1998 the division evaluated seven Fish and Wildlife reviews.

**Appraisals:** Nine appraisals were completed by the division.

**Acquisitions:** Game and Parks Commission acquired title to the following tracts in 1998:



## Wildlife Management Areas

Area	County	Acres Acquired
Frenchman	Hayes	98.55
Kissinger Basin addition	Clay	40.00
South Pine	Brown	442.96
Jack Sinn Memorial addition	Lancaster	80.00
White Front	Clay	160.00
Cottonwood / Steverson addition	Cherry	476.38
Flathead	Jefferson	141.35
Wilkinson	Platte	625.72
Kissinger Basin (trade)	Clay	(3.01)
Kissinger Basin addition	Clay	6.48
Kissinger Basin addition	Clay	2.42
Rose Creek	Jefferson	276.40
TOTAL		2,347.25



# WILDLIFE

The division worked on several initiatives that partnered monies from other entities to satisfy mutual resource goals. Additionally the division spent considerable time improving private land habitat improvement and access programs, recreational hunting opportunities and creating customer-friendly procedures.

Special highlights in 1998 included continued growth in public access and habitat improvement through expansion of the CRP-MAP program; a highly successful, first-ever Nebraska bighorn sheep season; record deer and elk seasons; initiation of a youth pheasant season; expansion of mentored youth functions; and the addition of several new wildlife management areas.

Continually striving to improve the stewardship of the state's wildlife and outdoor recreational resources in the best long term interest of the people and those resources is quite a challenge. To balance the desires of the public with the limitations of the resource, the division has taken several steps to improve public responsiveness.

In a broad sense, the division is involved in four areas of responsibility: Research and Inventory, Education, Habitat Management, and Resource Management. Highlights and trends of activities related to these four broad areas follow.

## RESEARCH AND INVENTORY

Research involves ongoing inventory and analysis of the state's wildlife and habitat resources. These efforts utilize several ongoing survey techniques as well as special projects to help monitor wildlife populations and habitat conditions.

Research and monitoring activities are critical in determining the basic foundations of resource management efforts. In Nebraska there are more than 97 mammals, 400 birds, 84 fishes, 50 amphibians and reptiles, 32 mollusks and tens of thousands of other invertebrate species, 1,600 native plants, 60 natural communities, (Figure 1). Less than 10 percent of animals are monitored and managed as game species.

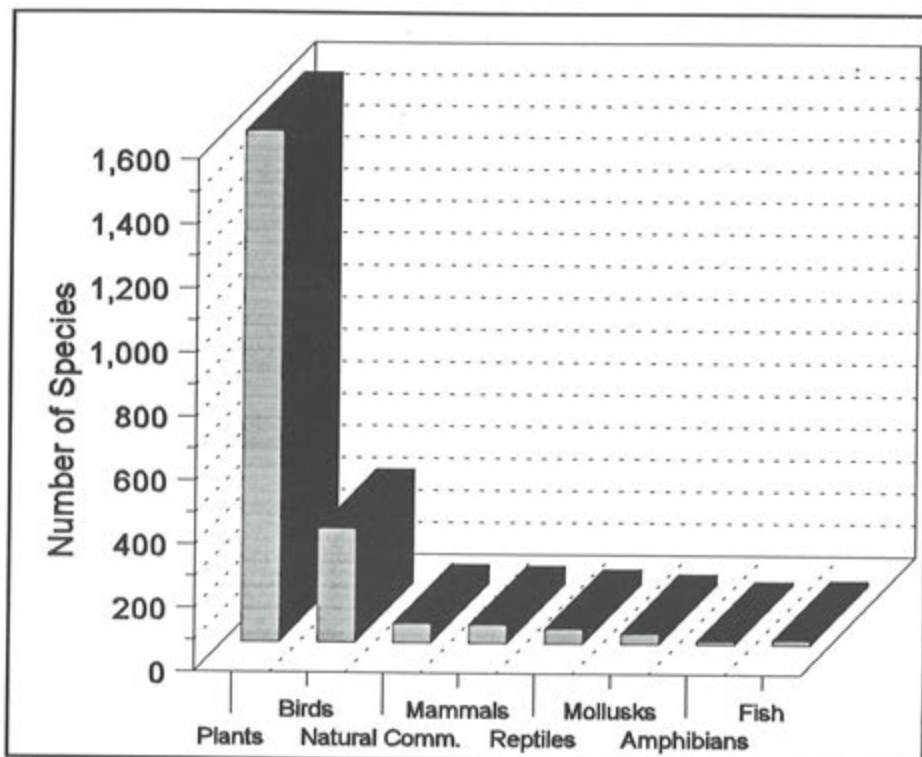


Figure 1. Number of native non-game animals, plants and natural communities in Nebraska.

While many routine game surveys dominate the division's research and monitoring activities, outside funding was actively sought and received for investigations of both hunted and non-hunted wildlife.

These investigations epitomize the concept of partnering with other natural resource entities. Partners included Bureau of Reclamation; U.S. Army Corp of Engineers; University of Nebraska; Environmental Trust Fund; Safari Club International; U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; The Nature Conservancy; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Ducks Unlimited; U.S. Geological Survey; and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Examples include:

- Bighorn sheep habitat evaluation
- Rainwater Basin light goose study
- Pesticide protection monitoring
- Disease testing in wild turkeys
- Testing for chronic wasting disease in cervidae
- Brainworm monitoring in white-tailed deer
- E. Coli testing in white-tailed deer
- Trap testing project
- Natural community sampling
- Conservation site inventory in western Nebraska

- Whooping Crane habitat study
- Sandhill streams threatened and endangered fish inventory and habitat restoration project
- Ecology of ornate box turtle in Nebraska study
- American Burying Beetle study
- Central Tall Grass Prairie Ecoregional planning
- Ute Ladies' Tresses Panhandle survey
- Republican River Eagle study
- Northern Steppe and Control Short-Grasses Ecoregion planning

To accurately reflect the continually changing status of the state's resources and effect of conservation actions, the research/monitoring process is dynamic and ongoing. Continuing studies involve threatened and/or endangered species such as Bald Eagles, Least Terns and Piping Plovers.

Financial resources tend to limit much of this work, thus the division has and will continue to seek alternative funding. Of special note is the effort in 1998 to secure funding for a cooperative habitat protection project for Least Tern and Piping Plover nesting areas with sand and gravel groups. Funding should be



available in 1999 to start the project. Support and promotion of the Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative "Teaming with Wildlife," which could provide added funding, continued to occupy staff.

Many routine game surveys were conducted. Snow goose surveys in the breeding grounds and elsewhere continued to indicate a dangerously high population level that was negatively impacting nesting habitat. All trend information was used in setting seasons and bag limits for all affected species and will be discussed in more detail under the Resource Management section.

The forensic/genetics lab played a key role in providing information to biologists and law enforcement officers, while assisting in investigations nationally. Over 35 forensic cases were examined, and several genetic and disease testing efforts were initiated.

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Resource Management is an all encompassing area which includes wildlife utilization through season setting, harvest regulation, accessibility issues, statutory and regulatory action.

This area includes some of the most publicly visible activities of the division. However, most of the 'work' in this arena is less recognized with numerous meetings, data analysis and survey activities covering a wide variety of wildlife impacting issues. Perhaps the most widely identifiable aspect of this activity is the annual season setting and harvest regulation efforts which result in the annual hunting regulations.

In addition to these efforts which directly impact resource use, considerable time is spent working on other issues and activities outside the direct control of the agency, which can and do impact wildlife resources as a whole through external actions, legislation and public debate.

The latter items are often the least visible and/or understood. On the local level, well over a dozen proposed state legislative bills were addressed by staff. They all had potential for direct or indirect impact on wildlife resource utilization,

classification, and habitat. Staff spent hundreds of hours gathering information, drafting possible legislative language and preparing facts for testimony. A few issues dealt with include:

- ✓ Big Horn Sheep permit regulations
- ✓ Big Game permit changes
- ✓ Outfitter licensing
- ✓ Captive animals and controlled shooting areas
- ✓ Wildlife classifications
- ✓ Importation of wildlife

On the national level, it has long been recognized that federal farm legislation plays an integral part in habitat impacts and subsequently affects wildlife populations. Thousands of hours were devoted to national legislative issues with recognizable results. A few of the national legislative arenas addressed included:

- ✓ Public Lands Grazing Policy
- ✓ Waterfowl Baiting
- ✓ Endangered Species Act rewriting/reauthorization
- ✓ Teaming With Wildlife
- ✓ Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
- ✓ Liberated goose hunting regulations
- ✓ Title Transfer on Farwell Irrigation District

In addition to active involvement in development of underlying legislative rules on the federal level, many staff members devoted hundreds of hours to shaping and implementing the programs at the local level. Nebraska's citizens and wildlife resources should no doubt reap the rewards of these efforts, which often go unnoticed.

Staff spent many hours gathering public input through surveys, meetings and informal calls and correspondence. Crop depredation response was another key part of Resource Management efforts and pivotal to management recommendations. Input from these sources tied to biological information gained through research and analysis continued to influence harvest recommendations.

Harvest results indicate 1998 can be considered a success. The tables (above and next page) give harvest information for deer and five-year summaries of information for deer and furbearers.

## 1998 DEER HARVEST

Season	Permits Sold	Harvest
Archery	14,866	4,102
November Firearm	64,561	40,276
Muzzleloader	13,070	4,235
Special Seasons	7,365	4,726
Deer Totals	99,862	53,339

## FIVE-YEAR DEER HARVEST RESULTS

Year	Rifle	Archery	Muzzle Loader
1994	33,085	4,150	3,050
1995	37,542	4,451	3,128
1996	35,670	4,472	3,585
1997	43,261	4,148	4,104
1998	40,276	4,102	4,235

## HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Habitat management takes place on both public and private lands and is geared to provide wildlife and natural communities with the necessary components for survival.

Helping wildlife where they live, in their habitat, is one of our major activities. The division strives continually to improve habitat on both private and public lands and to optimize recreational access to those lands. Next to weather, habitat is the most vital component to ensuring viable wildlife populations. Efforts aim to meet wildlife habitat needs wherever and whenever we can.

Additionally, providing access to these habitat areas, whether for traditional hunting and trapping activities or wildlife enjoyment, is an integral part of the picture. The "Governor's Pheasant Initiative" included the same focus of improving habitat and increasing access for hunting. The division was involved in activities including habitat improvement, hunter access, hunting promotion and community based hunter outreach that helped to meet the goal of the Governor's Pheasant Initiative.

Nebraska has approximately 49.4 million acres of land and water, and around 97% of it is in private ownership.



## FIVE-YEAR FURBEARER HARVEST RESULTS

	Muskrat	Beaver	Mink	Raccoon	Opossum	Coyote	Red Fox	Bobcat	Badger
1993-94	26,949	11,368	2,809	88,833	3,692	29,338	2,573	194	1,023
1994-95	32,718	19,357	4,442	150,695	8,015	28,679	3,647	242	1,874
1995-96	24,110	14,039	2,218	130,697	9,683	26,765	3,036	278	1,624
1996-97	71,472	27,823	5,188	231,986	18,517	36,443	4,941	360	2,224
1997-98	57,010	25,267	4,236	252,525	22,839	36,213	5,053	410	3,093

The agency manages approximately 162,000 acres as wildlife management areas (roughly 0.3% of the state). With these figures in mind, it is understandable why the division devotes considerable effort to private and other public (non agency owned or controlled) lands.

Several projects in 1998 were outstanding examples of modern, professional wildlife management. Some of the more notable happenings are:

☆ In March, Wilkinson WMA was gifted to the by the Todd Valley Wetland Foundation. This 640-acre tract, located in Platte county, includes 300 acres of restored wetlands through the construction of burms/dikes, shallow excavations and the installation of 16 stoplog drain tubes. The development of nine individual cells allows for moist soil management specific to each cell. Special regulations include the prohibition of rifles and handguns and requires use of non-toxic shot for all game species.

☆ In April, the division did a controlled burn on the Ponderosa Wildlife Management Area near Crawford, Nebraska to reduce doghair stands of pine seedlings that were of little value to wildlife and removed dangerous wildfire fuels. This activity burned approximately 1,200 acres of prime deer and turkey habitat. The purpose of this disturbance was to change plant succession and improve wildlife habitat. This was a cooperative effort with the Crawford Fire Department, State Fire Marshall, local landowners and the U.S. Forest Service. Professors and students from nearby Chadron State College will be studying the fire and its effects on the habitat for the next several years.

☆ Also during 1998, the Commission assumed management responsibilities for the Hamburg Bend area on the Missouri River. This was the first of several mitigation sites along the river being developed for wildlife by the U.S. Corps of Engineers, then given to the state for management purposes. Development on this site included the installation of a chute through the area to return it to the natural, braided state that benefits both fish and wildlife.

☆ C.R.P.-M.A.P. - The Conservation Reserve Program - Management Access Program was developed as a pilot program to improve pheasant habitat and public access on CRP fields. There were 71,000 acres open for hunter access from Sept. 1 through Jan. 31. Landowners in 64 counties provided access to hunters through 487 contracts. This program received much praise from the public.

☆ S.H.I.P. - The Seasonal Habitat Improvement program is designed to provide shallow water habitat in the 17 counties of the Rainwater Basin for migratory birds during the non-cropping season. This project is part of a coordinated effort between the Commission and the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture to protect and enhance wetlands. Over 400 acres of wetlands are under contract and have been restored or soon will be.

Additionally, as described in the Resource Management narrative, staff devoted thousands of hours in technical assistance to federal agencies and private landowners for the field implementation of Federal Farm Bill program initiatives and habitat development projects on federal lands.

Major ongoing joint ventures are being undertaken in two areas across the state for restoration and enhancement of habitat - (1) Upper Mississippi Joint Venture program and (2) the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture, which has made great strides with restoration projects on Kissinger Basin WMA, Father Hupp WMA, and on wetland areas in the Rock Creek drainage system.

## EDUCATION

Education is actually intertwined with most of our actions and is designed to better inform the public of the issues facing our states wildlife and habitat resources and what steps we are taking to ensure their longevity.

An education component is actually intertwined in and among most of our activities. Having a well-informed public is fundamental to obtaining support for the sustained and appreciative use of Nebraska's wildlife and recreational resources. In cooperation with other divisions and/or other outside agency partnering efforts, wildlife staff were involved with several educational initiatives in 1998 including:

- ⇒ Waterfowl Youth Hunting
- ⇒ Dove Youth Hunts
- ⇒ Pheasant Youth Hunts
- ⇒ Spring Migration Guide
- ⇒ Present findings and gather information at national meetings
- ⇒ Conducted school and public service presentations
- ⇒ Computer homepage development and enhancement

1998 was a busy year for the division. This report touches only some of the highlights of our responsive year. Several ongoing activities occupied time during 1998 as well to include work on Canada goose restoration, wetland restoration efforts, including Rainwater Basin Joint Venture implementation efforts, Missouri River Mitigation planning and coordination, area management planning and implementation as well as coordination with other government entities on properties they own or control. The activities of 1998 were as rich and diverse as the state's wildlife and habitat resources.





